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KUBJIKĀ, KĀLĪ, TRIPURĀ AND TRIKA

MARK S. G. DYCZKOWSKI

This essay is about the goddess Kubjikā.* The cult of this obscure goddess[1] will be compared with that of the much better known goddess Kālī, and references will occasionally be made to the goddess Tripurā. The latter, like Kubjikā, figures prominently right from the start of her history in the Śākta Kaula Tantras,[2] the former emerges initially in the Bhairava Tantras[3] but soon becomes a member of the Kaula pantheon. For those interested in Nepalese studies an important common feature of these three goddesses and their ectypes is the central position they have held for several centuries in the esoteric Tantrism of high-caste Hindu Newars as their lineage (*kula)* deities. Thus the aim of this paper is twofold. One is to present a general overview of some salient features of the typology of these forms of the sacred. The other is to present a brief introduction to Newar Śāktism as the context in which the goddess Kubjikā has been worshipped for most of her history.

One of the most basic features of the complex and multi-layered religion of the Newars is the thoroughness with which it has been permeated with Tantrism. This is true of both Newar Buddhism and Hinduism. In what follows I will deal exclusively with the latter. In Nepal, as elsewhere, Hinduism displays a remarkable capacity to preserve and maintain older forms of religion alongside the newer, giving each its place in the economy of the expanded whole. Thus, for example, the present Gorkhali kings, like the Malla kings before them, are still considered to be

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1 See Dyczkowski 1987a: 95ff. for a summary of the work published up to that time on this goddess. Since then more work has been published. See the bibliography.

2 I refer here to the Kaula Tantras as Śākta, not in a technical, but a descriptive sense. Śākta as a technical term denoting those cults, scriptures, or people associated with the worship of the goddess as Śakti (meaning literally 'power') is absent from the terminology of the Tantras prior to the eleventh century. Instead we find the term *Kula* and it cognate *Kaula.*

According to Abhinavagupta (PTv pp. 32ff.: see Pandey 1963: 594f.), the term *Kula* is derived from the root *kul* which means 'coming together as a group'. Thus, in a non-technical sense, the word *kula* means 'family'. A wide range of symbolic meanings that refer to metaphysical and yogic concepts are found in this term by Tantric exegetes. Amongst the Newars the non-technical sense is never forgotten. *Kula* is not just the divine family, i.e. aggregate of the god's energies gathered together in the figure of his Tantric consort, it is also the human family of the goddess's disciples who, amongst the Newars, are also literally related.

3 Concerning the Bhairava Tantras, see Dyczkowski 1987a: 42ff., also below.

incarnations of Viṣṇu, and Śiva Paśupati remains, as he has been for centuries, the patron god of Nepal. These gods along with the ubiquitous Bhairava, Śiva's wrathful form, and the goddess Durgā, otherwise known as Bhagavatī, and the eight mother goddesses (*mātṛkā*) who are arranged in protective circles around the Kathmandu Valley and its major cities, and the many Gaṇeśas who protect the quarters of Newar towns, villages and countryside are the basic constituents of the Newars' public religion. They are the gods of the 'outside' public domain, what Levy has aptly called the 'civic space' or 'mesocosm'. Easily accessible to researchers, they have been the object of a great deal of study. But there is another 'inner' secret domain which is the Newars' 'microcosm'. This does not form a part of the sacred geography of the Newar civitas, although, from the initiates' point of view, it is the source and reason of much of it. The deities that populate this 'inner space' and their rites are closely guarded secrets and, often, they are the secret identity of the public deities, known only to initiates.

The two domains complement each other. The outer is dominantly male. It is the domain of the attendants and protectors of both the civic space and the inner expanse, which is dominantly female. By this I mean that while the deities in the public domain may be both male and female, the male dominates the female, while the secret lineage deities of the higher castes are invariably female accompanied by male consorts. The interplay of these two polarities generates the complex structures of Newar religion. Again, this, the inner domain is layered and graded in hierarchies of deepening and more elevated esoterism that ranges from the individual to his family group, clan, caste and out through the complex interrelationships that make up Newar society. Thus the interplay between the inner and outer domains is maintained both by the secrecy in which it is grounded and one of the most characteristic features of Newar Tantrism as a whole, namely, its close relationship to the Newar caste system.[4]

It is commonly accepted by Tantrics everywhere that the teachings of the Tantras should be kept secret, although in actual practice the degree to which secrecy is maintained varies and the Newars are amongst the most orthodox in this respect. But this other feature of Newar Tantrism is in striking contrast to the precepts of the Tantras, especially the Kaula Tantras that tirelessly admonish equality.[5] The qualifications required of an aspirant are not those of birth but purity of

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[4] Quigley confirms that one of the aspects of Newar society on which everyone is more or less agreed is that "caste divisions are underscored, as are all aspects of Newar social life, by pervasive ritual. While certain rituals bring togther all the inhabitants of a particular settlement, many others are primarily oriented to an individual or a particular kinship group - a household, for example, or a group of affines, or perhaps a lineage." (Gellner and Quigley 1995: 300). Especially important amongst the 'many others' for the higher castes are Tantric rituals.

[5] It is worth stressing that although the Tantras enjoin that when initiates sit together to perform their Tantric rites there should be no caste distinctions, they become operant once more when the ritual ends. The two domains, the 'inner' Tantric and the 'outer' *Smārta*, are treated independently. Thus, for example, once the aspirant has received initiation in the Tantric cult of Svacchandabhairava, which is an important part of Newar esoterism, as it was of Kashmiri, the *Svacchandabhairavatantra* prescribes expiation for anyone who even mentions prior caste: *prāgjātyudiraṇād devi prayaścittī bhavennaraḥ* | (SvT 4/544b; cf. ibid. 4/414. Abhinavagupta enjoins the same for Trika Śaivites in TĀ 15/576). Further on, however, the Tantra enjoins that 'one should not criticize the *Smārta* religion which teaches the path of right conduct.' *smārtaṁ dharmaṁ na nindet tu ācārapathadarśakam* (ibid. 5/45; see Arraj 1988: 29-30 fn. 2. Note, however, that at the same time strict distinctions were maintained between initiates of different Tantric traditions (see Dyczkowski 1987a: 166 fn. 34).

In this aspect, as in many others, Tantric ritual is analogous to its Vedic predecessor. Thus Heesterman points out that after the conclusion of the Vedic sacrifice "about to leave the ritual enclosure, the sacrificer, whether king or commoner, returns to his normal, unchanged self in society: 'Here I am just as I am,' as he has to declare in his concluding mantra (ŚB 1/1/1/6; 1/9/3/23). Nothing has changed."

conduct. Accordingly, the Tantras devote long sections to listing the qualities required of the disciple and those of the teacher. The teacher must examine the disciple to see if he is devoted to the teacher and the deity. Like the teacher, he must be a moral person and not deceitful. Caste status is never a consideration. Indeed, those of low caste are believed to have a special power by virtue of their low status - thus reversing the common view that those of high caste, especially Brahmins, possess it. The Newars are well aware of this principle, which is nicely exemplified by the many well-known stories of the life and exploits of the Brahmin Gayapati, better known as Gayaḥbājyā, who was instructed in the use of mantras by an outcaste (*poḍe*).[6]

But this is the exception which proves the rule. In actual fact, Newars cannot choose their Tantric guru. Nor are they all allowed to have one. The rule is so rigidly applied that the nineteenth-century chronicle, the *Bhāṣāvaṁśāvali*, meticulously lists the names of the castes whose members can 'receive mantra' and those who can give it.[7] Significantly, these prescriptions are attributed to Sthitimalla, the fourteenth-century king who was famous for having established the caste structure of Newar society. In actual fact, his contribution was more probably a reform and extension of a pre-existing caste system, which we know from references in much earlier inscriptions, predated him.[8] But while some credence may be given to Sthitimalla's legislation of the caste system, we are

6 Gayaḥbājyā was almost certainly a historical figure. He was a Brahmin who lived in Sulimhā, in the western part of the core area of Patan, in the sixteenth century. There are many stories of the miracles he performed by the powers he acquired with the help of an outcaste (*poḍe*). I am grateful to Nūtan Śarmā for giving me a copy of an unpublished paper called 'The Story of Gayaḥbājyā' in which he collects some of these stories and data establishing the historicity of Gayaḥbājyā. The following is a brief summary of one of the most famous of them (see N. Sharma 1991: 1f. and 1993: 46f.).

The pious Gayaḥbājyā used to go daily for his morning ablutions to Mṛtyuñjaya Ghāṭ ('Riverbank of the Conqueror of Death') at the confluence of the rivers Vāgmatī and Manoharā. One day, on his way to the river, it began to rain very heavily. He took shelter under the roofing overhanging the nearest house, which happened to belong to an untouchable who was famous in Patan as a powerful Tantric. Inside the house a child was crying. The mother who had tried in every way to calm it, and became exasperated, laid hold of a knife and stabbed it to death. Soon afterwards, the father came home and seeing what had happened consoled his wife and, taking the child into another room, brought it back to life. Astonished by what he had seen, Gayaḥbājyā took to standing outside the untouchable's house for a while every day when he passed to take his bath. Although he was very curious, Gayaḥbājyā was conscious of his status as a Brahmin and so would never ask to be admitted. Then one day the outcaste asked him why he came daily to stand outside his house. Gayaḥbājyā took the opportunity to ask the outcaste to reveal his Tantric secrets. The outcaste agreed and told him to come after four days with a bunch of wood apple leaves (*belpatra*), which Gayaḥbājyā did. Then they went together to the riverbank where the Brahmin bathed daily. The outcaste then told him to bathe. When Gayaḥbājyā had finished, the outcaste squatting on a platform where ancestral offerings (*śrāddha*) are made, wrote mantras on the wood apple leaves and threw them into the river, telling Gayaḥbājyā to eat them. When he had done so, he was astonished to discover that he knew all the mantras. However, he had not acquired their power (*siddhi*). Instructed by the outcaste, Gayaḥbājyā began to worship Bhuṁḍe Gaṇeśa in order to empower the mantras he had received. After some days, Gaṇeśa appeared to him and told him to go to the shrine of Bālkumārī on the night of the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight (*pācahre*) in March when the Ḍākinī witches gather to prepare magic collyrium (*mohanī*). This collyrium, Gaṇeśa told him, would give him the powers he sought. Eventually, Gayaḥbājyā managed to acquire the collyrium and, smearing it on his forehead, he attained the power (*siddhi*) he sought and became a great Tantric.

7 See *Bhāṣāvaṁśāvali* pp. 156ff.

8 Slusser writes: "The Indian caste system was in effect in the Nepal Valley from at least the beginning of the Licchavi Period [i.e. the fourth century], as inscriptions attest. Similarly, the complex system of subcastes that ordain Valley social behaviour must be viewed as the product of centuries of gradual accretion, not a sudden imposition of law. [...] Nonetheless, Sthitimalla may well have codified the

not yet in a position to say to what degree, if any, he contributed to the formal ordering of esoteric Tantrism. Even so, we can say with confidence that the system, carefully graded and regulated by caste considerations, was well in place when the *Bhāṣāvaṁśāvali* was written and in all probability for a number of centuries prior to that.

One of the reasons for this phenomenon is certainly the powerful influence Brahmins have had on the formation of the Newar, essentially Hindu, state through their influential patrons (*yajamāna*), especially the Newar kings and their officials. It is hard to resist this view when we observe that the system is constructed in such a way that when it is functioning in ideal circumstances, at least from the Newar Brahmin's point of view, the Newar Brahmins are the sole dispensers of the vital initiation that allows access to it. The situation, then, is analogous to the monopoly Brahmins have striven to achieve throughout their history everywhere in South Asia, and wherever there are Hindus, as family priests (*purohita*) for the higher 'twice-born' castes. In this capacity they perform the *smārta* rites of passage (*saṁskāra*) that mark a Hindu's progress through life from conception to death. In the case of the higher Newar castes who are entitled to receive it, the family Brahmin *purohita* or another Newar Brahmin, whose traditional office it is to do so, may give Tantric initiation to those members of the family who have passed through all the rites of passage preceding marriage and desire it. Thus a Newar Brahmin may be both *purohita* and Tantric guru.[9]

Even so, the two priestly functions are always clearly distinguished. This is evidenced by the fact that they may be performed by two different Brahmins. But even in those cases, each extended Newar family lineage (*phuki*)[10] of all but the lowest castes is traditionally associated with a specific Brahmin family who performs these functions. The initiation given to members of the higher castes, that is, the ones eligible to receive the sacred thread, is into the worship of one of the goddesses belonging to six Kula lineages (*āmnāya*) amongst which Kubjikā, forms of Kālī and Tripurā are the most important. She is the 'chosen deity' (*iṣṭadevatā*)[11] and lineage goddess (*kuladevatā, āmnāyadevatā*) of the aspirant's extended family lineage (*phuki*).

While certain Brahmins can give initiation to people who do not belong to their lineages, there is a second group of people who are empowered to dispense Tantric initiation only to their

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particular social patterns that had developed by his time, and thus given local custom the force of law" (Slusser 1982: 59).

9 For a general account of these two aspects of the Newar Brahmin's function, see Toffin 1989.

10 Ishii provides a basic definition of the term *phuki*. He says that this term is "used principally among males who have a close patrilineal relation to each other but reside in different households ... in a broad sense, all the members of the residential family of a person who is referred to as *phuki* can be called *phuki* as well" (Ishii 1987: 338 fn. 7). By 'residential family' Ishii means the household in which the members share the same kitchen. For a detailed discussion see Ishii 1995: 141-146.

11 In India the 'chosen deity' a person may have is literally that, a particular god or goddess to whom that individual feels especially attracted. Coincidentally, this deity may well be one that has been worshipped in his or her family. Indian kings regularly have such family deities. The Newar kings had several chosen deities. The Licchavis (fourth to ninth century) had Paśupati and Viṣṇu and a goddess called Māneśvarī. The worship of Māneśvarī was maintained by the Malla kings. Raṇajitmalla (ruled 1722-1769 A.D.), for example, refers to her in his inscription on the side of the gate to his Bhaktapur palace as his 'chosen deity'. (In this inscription the king refers to himself as *śrīmatpaśupaticaraṇakamaladhūlidhūsarita - śiroruhaśrīmanmāneśvarīṣṭadevatāvaralabdha-*. See A. D. Sharma 1954 for a detailed notice of this inscription.) From the time of Sthitimalla the Mallas also adopted the goddess Taleju. She was their lineage goddess. However, this did not prevent them from having other 'outer' chosen deities. Siddhinarasiṁhamalla (1597-1619 A.D.) of Patan, for example, chose Kṛṣṇa for himself. His son, Śrīnivāsamalla chose Matysendranātha who was, and still is, the 'chosen deity' of the city of Patan. Again, to close the circle as it were, the chosen deity of Matsyendranātha is Siddhilakṣmī, the goddess Taleju (see below).

own family members. These are the Brahmin's assistants the Jośis (astrologers) and Ācājus (both Kshatriya castes). The latter are also called Karmācāryas, which is an appellation derived from the Sanskrit name for a Kaula teacher, namely, Kramācārya. D. R. Regmi (1965-1966, 1, p. 715, quoted in Levy 1991: 356) defines their function as follows: "These Ācājus functioned as inferior priests in all Brahman led households. They accepted *dakṣiṇā* (gifts in money) as well as food in their host's house [....] But they could not chant the Vedic mantras and also could not conduct the [Vedic] rituals. These were done by Brahmans alone. The Ācājus and Jośis, however, were indispensable for any [complex] ritual. The Jośi was concerned with the task of finding out an auspicious time for any kind of rite performed. The Ācāju helped to arrange methodically the requirements of the ritual performance. He prepared the ground work for the actual rite. It was left for the Brahman priest to use them."

The Jośi's functions may be much more complex than those described here. Indeed, nowadays the Jośis who belong to families traditionally linked with the worship of Taleju, the Malla kings' lineage deity, have many rituals to perform in the Taleju temples of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur. In Kathmandu, the Taleju Brahmin who worships in the Malla kings' private chapel (*āgañ*) is assisted by a Jośi, not a Karmācārya, in the performance of the daily rites (*nityapūjā*), although Karmācāryas do assist in the more lengthy occasional rites.[12] In Bhaktapur, where both Jośis and Karmācāryas have ritual functions in the Taleju temple (*āgañ*) of the Malla royal palace, the Jośis have more to do than the Karmācāryas. This is certainly not the way it was in the past. This is clear from the fact that Karmācāryas in general have much more extensive priestly functions than do Jośis. Thus in Bhaktapur, for example, where Karmācāryas have, as elsewhere, numerous patrons (*yajamāna*) for whom they perform Tantric rituals, the Jośis do not have any.

This is the case even though Jośis are generally considered to have a higher caste status than Karmācāryas. The latter are of varying status in different places. In Bhaktapur, where the status of such auxiliary priests in general is considered to be lower than in the other cities, there are also Ācājus belonging to the farmer (*jyāpu*) castes. Their function, which they share with other Karmācāryas, is to worship the mother goddesses who encircle and protect the city.

Thus we find that there is a hierarchy of ritual agents of varying status graded amongst the Newars according to their caste and ritual functions. A cardinal feature of the situation as it is at present is the fact that Karmācāryas do not receive initiation from Brahmins. The latter do continue to act as their *purohitas* and perform their *smārta* life cycle rituals for them. There are reasons to believe, however, that they did originally take initiation from them. Karmācāryas assert, especially the ones of higher status, that they can compile liturgies when required, and probably have done so. But although there are many amongst them who claim that because they can do this they are not dependent on Brahmins, it is they, nonetheless, who go to consult Brahmins when in doubt concerning ritual procedure, not the other way around. Moreover, their roles are always those of assistants, and they cannot give initiation to people outside their lineage. This is the case with Jośis also. The Bhaktapur Jośis believe that they were originally Brahmins and that this is the reason why they can initiate their own lineage members. Even so, in both cases Brahmins perform ritual

[12] The degree in which this relationship has been politicized is well illustrated by the reversal of roles that takes place in the Taleju temple (not to be confused with the *āgañ*) of the Kathmandu Malla royal palace. There, the main daily officiant is a Karmācārya who is, apparently, assisted by a Newar Brahmin. The latter cooks the mixture of rice and pulse that is the deity's daily food offering (*bhoga*) because, in order to avoid pollution, a Brahmin must do this. Thus, although Karmācāryas have managed to take over almost all of the ritual functions in this temple and so pocket the money offering and take home most of the remains of the many food offerings financed by the Nepalese government, they could not eliminate the Brahmin, who was originally their boss, altogether. But in this case, paradoxically, as he is the most senior because of his ritual purity, he has been reduced to the status of a cook.

functions for them that they cannot do alone. The most revealing of these from this point of view is the necessary presence of Brahmins at certain crucial junctures in the thirteen days required for the death rites (*antyeṣṭi*). Although I have not as yet examined the liturgies in question, I have been reliably informed by a Rājopādhyāya of Bhaktapur that on one of these occasions, if the deceased Karmācārya was an initiate, a rite is performed aimed at returning the mantra to the deity and the guru from whom it was received. Even though the deceased Karmācārya received initiation from a senior family member, on this crucial occasion it is a Brahmin who acts as the guru, thus revealing the identity of the original point of entry of the Karmācārya's lineage to its ritual status.

Smārta Hinduism, at least that part of it concerned with the rites of passage distinguishes, in some respects, very clearly between the priest, who can perform rituals, and the layman who cannot perform them himself and so must employ a priest for this purpose. But even in that case a great deal of ritual activity in a *smārta* rite is undertaken by the priest's patron, although he does so as directed by the priest, not independently. He can do this because he is empowered by an initiatory purification at the beginning of the rite, analogous to the Vedic initiation (*dīkṣā*) which formed a part of the preliminaries of each sacrifice (*yajña*). By thus bestowing on his patron the right to share in his priestly functions, the Brahmin attempted to free himself of the danger of taking his patron's impurites onto himself. Summarizing Heesterman's view on the classical Vedic sacrifice, Quigley (1993: 59) explains:

> In the classical ritual, the patron (*yajamāna*) has already been purified. Acutely aware of the dangers inherent in accepting a patron's gifts and thereby his impurity, the 'brahmin' has made his sacrificial services 'superfluous' (Heesterman 1985: p. 39). Or, put another way, the patron has become his own priest with the result that death and impurity no longer circulate between the parties.

But while Newar Brahmins are aware that ritual action may defile their classical Brahminical identity, their ranking of status[13] is only partially based on considerations of relative purity. This is because, in the context of Tantric ritual, these considerations are temporarily suspended, to be replaced by the ordinances of a different ritual universe.[14] The corollary to this is that, in the context of Tantric ritual, the contact with sources of defilement (including his patron's impurities) no longer serves to depress in the same degree the status of a Brahmin or anyone who functions as a priest. Thus, even more so than in the non-Tantric context, the empowerment

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[13] Quigley pertinently points out that there is a gulf between the theory that Brahmins stand supreme in the caste hierarchy and practice where their status is, for various reasons, subordinated to that of their patrons. Quigley refers to this theory as a "colonial interpretation of caste" (Quigley 1993: 84) with which modern scholars often concur. But "why," he asks, "should they claim that the Brāhmaṇ stands supreme when, time after time, his status is shown to be intensely ambivalent, at worst vilely degrading?" (ibid.) Quigley writes that the main reason for the "near unanimous defence of the Brāhmaṇ's supremacy lies in the fact that authorities on Hinduism have, more often than not, illigitimately fused two very different concepts - *jāti* and *varṇa* - or caste (Brāhmaṇ) and [priestly] function (*brāhmaṇ*). Here they have indeed made the same mistake as colonial administrators." We should not forget, however, that the foremost of these authorities are the Brahmins themselves! Moreover, it is not only scholars and colonials who have been misled by these authorities but virtually all Hindus, even though many will agree that Brahmins can be, and very often are, degraded by impurity. The contrast between Brahminical theory and actual practice is the basis of the energizing tension and dynamism that characterizes every Hindu society.

[14] This procedure is well exemplified by the formulations of Śrīvidyā initiates in Bhāskararāya's tradition in Benares. Brahmins may drink the ritual offerings of wine without defilement because, according to them, as caste considerations are suspended for the duration of the rite, they are not, at that time, Brahmins.

transmitted to the initiate from the deity through the guru and the rite of initiation enables him to begin his life as an independent ritual agent. He is, as far as the Tantric ritual to which he has gained access is concerned, his own priest and can act as a priest, for the members of his lineage at least. Thus Tantrism further blurs the distinction between priest and layman. The Tantric initiate is not like the baptised Catholic Christian layman, a passive and, at best, receptive, spectator of ritual action in which his function is hardly more than consent. Like priests of most religions, great and small, throughout the world he "has a special and sometimes secret knowledge of the techniques of worship including incantations, prayers, sacrificial acts, songs and other acts that are believed to bridge the separation between the divine or sacred and the profane realm."[15]

Tantrism in this respect reflects the diffusion of priestly functions throughout local communities in South Asia, including the Newars, where we see potters, barbers, washermen and others acting in priestly capacities on particular occasions, while in some cases, as happens with the Newars (see below), members or branches of families function as sacrificial priests for their cognate and affinal relatives (see Heesterman 1985: 152). Even so, Newar Kaula initiates cannot perform rituals for others outside their lineage unless they themselves are Brahmins or (Kshatriya) Karmācāryas. The only other limitation on the common initiate's ritual activity is purely practical. He may not have the time or the knowledge to do more than perform the relatively short and simple daily obligatory rite (*nityapūjā*). For other rituals he may therefore call the Karmācārya or Brahmin who is traditionally related to his lineage. In case there are no initiates left in the lineage or they are old, disabled or have moved to distant places (and these contingencies have nowadays become common) even the daily obligatory rite may be performed by a Karmācārya.

Thus initiates can be ranged along a graded hierarchy on the basis of the degree of independence they enjoy as ritual agents. At the top stands the Taleju Rājopādhyāya, who still acts as the Malla king's *purohita* and guru even though the Gorkhali Shahs have been ruling since 1769. He officiates at the innermost centre of the network of Hindu Newar esoterism - the Malla king's Tantric shrine where Taleju, his lineage goddess, is worshipped, as the liturgies say, for the benefit of the king, his country and his people.

Ideally - and in the past this was probably the case - the Taleju Brahmin is accepted by everybody as the sole head and foundation of the entire system. He is the ultimate guru of all the gurus. In a sense, he is not only the ultimate but the sole ritual agent. All initiates are his assistants. They act in his place through the extension of his empowering authority, transmitted to them through the initiation he administers. From this uncompromisingly autocratic point of view, all those who serve clients (*yajamāna*) with their priestly functions have been appointed to this task by the Rājopādhyāya. Their clients are really the clients of the Rājopādhyāya who has delegated this job to them. The Taleju Rājopādhyāya insists that he can do 'everything' and 'go everywhere'. Theoretically he has access to every secret place and can perform any ritual. In actual fact, however, at present at least, he cannot. There are numerous public temples - for example, the temple of Guhyeśvarī near Paśupati - where the sole officiants are Karmācāryas. Moreover, even if there are many Rājopādhyāya Brahmins who have their own traditional clients, even the seniormost Rājopādhyāya cannot enter a family's Tantric shrine (*āgañ*) if he is not specifically authorized to do so.

Even so, the Rājopādhyāya insists that the Karmācāryas' priestly functions are merely supplementary extensions of his own. He asserts that his ancestors created the range of Karmācāryas and the Jośis to act as his assistants. This is because although he can perform every ritual action, including animal sacrifice and the consumption of liquor (*ali*, *sudhā*), he may choose

[15] James 1974: 1007 quoted by Levy 1992: 346. Again, the Tantric situation reflects the earlier Vedic one in which power and authority were subject to dispersal depending on the outcome of the sacrificial contest.

not to do these things.[16] Moreover, there are rituals or parts of rituals that only he can perform. And so he must attend to them. Amongst them are the rituals that are considered to be the most dangerous and powerful. These are the most 'internal'. They are the rites of Taleju who is worshipped in conjunction with her innermost energizing counterpart, the goddess Kubjikā, the lineage goddess of the Taleju Rājopādhyāyas and, in all probability, of all the other Rājopādhyāyas, Karmācāryas and Jośis.

Of course, matters do not seem to be this way to others. As a result of what the Rājopādhyāya may call a mass rebellion, most of these other priests consider themselves to be autonomous agents. It is possible to meet a Karmācārya who bows his head respectfully as he says in a hushed voice that he is nothing but the servant of the Rājopādhyāya, but most are far from this fealty.[17] In Bhaktapur, the Karmācāryas who serve the upper castes (*thar*) affirm that they lived in Bhaktapur prior to the arrival of the Rājopādhyāyas, which took place hardly nine or ten generations ago, and that they were displaced by them from their original high status.[18] They point

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16 That this is the case is clearly proved by the fact that there are rituals that only Rājopādhyāyas can perform alone, the prime examples being those that require animal sacrifice that they must, therefore, do themselves even though they invariably prefer to have the actual killing done by an assistant whenever possible.

17 I am thinking in particular of an interview with a Karmācārya who, after performing the functions of the Karmācārya in the Taleju temple in Patan for many years, resigned. When asked if this was because of some quarrel with the Rājopādhyāya priests, he was surprised. "Why should we quarrel," he said, "they are our gurus and we are their assistants!" The reason he left was quite another. The government trust that finances the Taleju and other temples in the Valley gave him only one Nepalese rupee a day as remuneration. At present this is barely the price of a cup of tea. The tone and mood of this Karmācārya was in sharp contrast with that of the main Vidyāpīṭha Karmācārya who performs the equivalent rituals in the Bhaktapur Taleju temple. He is a senior science lecturer in Tribhuvan University and has several well-to-do patrons. Moreover, the situation in the Bhaktapur temple, although not good, is considerably better than in Patan, and so those who act as priests there are better rewarded. The Bhaktapur Karmācārya, who is in a much better financial position and, as a university lecturer, enjoys a better social status, combined with a self-assertive character, represents the kind of Karmācārya who is convinced of his own importance and resents the inferior status to which he is relegated by Rājopādhyāyas. He does not talk about his caste status. He prefers to talk about his competence as a ritual agent. He goes so far as to boast that he can perform the *smārta* life cycle rituals himself - which he is certainly not authorized to do. Clearly, competence to perform ritual is amongst the Newars a finely graded measure of status, no less than considerations of relative purity, which is the most basic measure of status in traditional Hindu societies.

18 The Bhaktapur Karmācāryas accept the historicity of the story of Ullāsa and Allāsa Rāj. These were two Brahmin brothers who came to the Valley from Kanauj. Allāsa Rāj went to the hills where, it is said, his descendants became the hill (*pārvatīya*) Brahmins. Ullāsa Rāj came to Bhaktapur and his descendants are said to be the present Rājopādhyāya Brahmins of Bhaktapur (Levy 1992: 346ff.). Another version says that the two brothers pleased the king by their Vedic recitation and were asked to stay. One remained in Bhaktapur, and the other in Kathmandu. There are several other legends (for which see Toffin 1995: 188). Genealogies have been recovered that begin with Ullāsa Rāj (see Witzel 1976). Toffin (1995: 188) writes:

> According to this document, this Kanaujīya priest arrived in the Nepal Valley in the middle of the sixteenth century and died in 1576. He is supposedly the earliest 'Nepalese' ancestor of the family. However, these dates have to be treated with caution because other interpretations of the genealogies are possible: the original ancestor could have migrated to Nepal in the fourteenth century, at roughly the same time as Taleju was brought to Bhaktapur, or at the end of the fifteen century during the reign of Raya Malla (1482-1505 AD).

The legends vary also for different cities, since 'Rājopādhyāya' was not originally a proper name but a title meaning the 'king's teacher', and it appears that several Brahmin families came at different times and settled in various places in the Valley. Toffin remarks:

to the Tantric shrines (*āgań*) where they, not Brahmins, perform rituals on behalf of the lineage members. Amongst them, they say, are the oldest ones. They are the gurus there, they say, because the Brahmins have not been able to displace them.

These disputes are clearly extensions of those that take place wherever society is ordered into castes, a social order that has been aptly characterized as a "contested hierarchy". In this case, the gradation of ritual empowerment is the defining characteristic of status. Accordingly, it is this that is the object of contention. The status associated with Tantric ritual empowerment is reflected in the distribution of priestly functions amongst the members of Newar family lineages. Thus, although every initiate is empowered to perform all the rituals associated with his own lineage diety, in practice, the seniormost members of the lineage - the *thakāli* (also called *nāyo*) and, to a lesser degree, his wife - the *nakin* - have special privileges and obligations along with other elders.[19]

Significantly, the *thakāli* and his wife must be present for at least the preliminary stages of the rites of Tantric initiation of members of their lineage. Traditionally it is the *thakāli* who performs the worship of the lineage deity in its aniconic form as a stone (see below). He must be present and often performs priestly functions in the major life cycle rites. In this he may complement the ritual activity of the family *purohita*. The *purohita* who, as we have said, must be a Brahmin, performs the Sanskrit rites. The *thakāli* may at times perform additional non-Sanskritic rites. A striking example of this is the *kaytāpūjā*. Amongst the upper castes this is done in conjunction with the *smārta* rite of passage in which a sacred thread is given to a young man as a sign of his entry into adulthood (*upanayana*). This part of the rite is basically the same as the one performed in India, while the other part of the rite is important enough to give its name to the whole ritual. Essentially, this consists of the donation of a loincloth - *kaytā* - to the young man as a token of his transformed status and full admission into his lineage as an adult. This is done not by the Brahmin, but by the *thakāli*.[20] Low castes (but not the lowest) who are not entitled to the *smārta* rite of passage retain the rites associated with the offering of the *kaytā* .

I believe that these are examples of many remnants of Newar religious customs that pre-existed the introduction of religion from India. Numerous anthropologists and historians have noted in a large number of contexts a hard core of beliefs and ritual practice, both individual and collective, that cannot be reduced to those of scriptural Hinduism or Buddhism. This should not surprise us. Indeed, we perceive the existence of analogous cores throughout the Indian subcontinent and wherever these religions have spread. It is this core which gives these religions and the traditional, essentially religious societies to whose development they contribute, their particular regional and local character. Certainly there are major problems involved in identifying the exact content of this core in Newar religion and social life for the simple reason that Indian

Nor does it seem that the present-day Rājopādhyāyas are all descended from a single ancestor as legend claims. Rather it appears that the first arrivals, no more than several families, continued to receive reinforcements until quite a late date (at least until the sixteenth or seventeenth century). The present Rājopādhyāya caste is thus more likely to have been a product of the amalgamation of successive waves of migrants than of the fission and separation of the descendants of a single ancestor (ibid. 191).

19 This is generally true of all Newars, whether Hindu or Buddhist. Thus, the lineages of Buddhist farmer castes (*jyāpu, maharjan*) in Patan and Kathmandu have a group of five elders who lead their community (Gellner and Quigley1995: 181 fn. 4).

20 Gellner reports that amongst the Buddhist farmer castes (*maharjan*): "once a Maharjan has been through the ritual of consecration of an elder (*thākuli* [= *thakāli*] *layegu*) in some circles he is considered able to act as a priest for such occasions as *kaytā pūjā* (loincloth worship), thus making it unnecessary to invite the Vajrācārya, domestic priest" (Gellner and Quigley1995: 181 fn. 4).

religions and social institutions have influenced the Newars for many centuries. Moreover, the subject is so extensive and controversial that it would require separate treatment. Even so, a few features of this core system of beliefs that are relevant to our topic need to be provisionally and succinctly tackled here, if we are to understand the specific character of Newar religion and, more specifically, the Tantrism of the higher castes which centres on the worship of the goddesses who are the subject of this essay.

To do this let us begin by returning to the figure of the *thakāli.* There are numerous circumstances in which the *thakāli* functions as the priest of the lineage of which he is the head. Amongst the lower castes he often operates in this capacity independently. In the case of the higher castes, his role as the lineage priest is eclipsed by the Sanskritic lineage priests, the guru, *purohita* and Karmācārya. Nonetheless the preeminent seniority he enjoys in his lineage is concretely apparent in his priestly functions. Particularly important from the point of view of this study is his role as the chief priest in the worship of a stone as the lineage deity, because Newar Śāktism is also centred on the worship of lineage (*kula*) deities.

The worship of these stones and, indeed the worship stones as deities in general, is a characteristic feature of Newar religion, both Buddhist and Hindu. When the founder of a lineage enters to settle in an inhabited space, he places a stone at its confines, thus delineating the territory in which he and his descendants reside.[21] This stone, often together with others in a small group, is venerated at least once a year by his descendants as their lineage deity - *digudyaḥ* . On the basis of the results of the surveys carried out so far, it transpires that the main deity worshipped in the stone by the lower castes, that is, those not entitled to receive Kaula initiation, is male. Amongst the farmer (*jyāpu*) lineages in Bhaktapur we find, amongst others, Mahādeva and Nārāyaṇa. The potters worship Gaṇeśa; stone- and metal-workers (*śilpakār*), Viśvakarman; and the copper- and bronze-workers (*tāmrakār*), Mahādeva. The stones are usually kept in a specific place to which lineage members go every year. The stones may be moved, or others selected elsewhere into which the deity is invoked.[22] In the course of the lengthy rite of adoration the present and, if the stone has

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21 Vergati writes: "What seemed to me specific to the Newars both Buddhists and Hindus was the relation between the lineage deity and a particular territory. The divinity was situated obligatorily in the same area as that in which the ancestors and senior members of the lineage resided. Even if people are unable to explain in detail their genealogies they always know where their lineage deity is situated" (Vergati 1995: 18).

22 A notable example of this in Bhaktapur was the shifting of the *digu* stone of the Taleju Rājopādhyāyas. The stone was kept in a small sacred grove called Sillighari, just outside Bhaktapur, where numerous lineage stones are kept. Although the worship of *digu* stones is not usually done in secret, the Rājopādhyayas do not wish to be observed when they perform these, or indeed, any rites. Accordingly, they built a wall around the area where the stone was located. But the bricks were repeatedly removed from the wall, making it hard for them to keep their rites secret. Thus they decided that they should move their stone. Accordingly, some forty years ago, all adult male Rājopādhyāyas of that lineage met around the stone. A ritual drawing of lots took place in order to ask the deity in the stone for its consent to move it. When the elders had decided on the basis of the outcome that this consent had been given, a new stone and companions were installed in the new location. And so now the new stone is located in a garden of the royal palace where the *digu* of the Malla kings is kept (see below).

The potential mobility of the deities in such stones is well illustrated by the unusual case of the *digu* deity of the Tamrakārs, the copper- and bronze-workers, of Bhaktapur. Although they always perform the rites of their *digu* deity at Hanumān Ghāṭ, they do not have the usual set of fixed *digu* stones. They must go to the river to collect fresh stones every time they worship their *digu.* They do this at random by simply closing their eyes and taking the first stones of an appropriate size they happen to touch. Eight stones are selected in this way. Seven of them represent guardians (*kṣetrapāla*), and the remaining one, the *digu.*

been shifted, previous locations of the stone are mentioned and the year of its removal. Thus it is possible to find people who know of the stone's location even several hundreds of years back.

It is also possible to share the same stone with others. This is what happens in the Pūrṇacaṇḍī temple in Patan. This and one other temple, also located in Patan,[23] along with three others in Bhaktapur[24] are the only open public temples to the goddess Siddhilakṣmī in the Valley. Here she is represented by a large stone. Although the goddess of this temple is commonly known as Pūrṇacaṇḍī, there can be no doubt the deity in the shrine is Siddhilakṣmī, because the tympanum bears an image of this goddess. Moreover, there is a lengthy hymn dedicated to this goddess inscribed on a slab cemented onto one of the walls. The temple was built by the Rājopādhyāyas of the locality (Valā). The stone in the temple serves as the *digudyāḥ* of a large number of families living in Patan, including all the lineages of Rājopādhyāyas in Patan.[25]

The story concerning the founding of this temple is still transmitted in the Valanimā lineage of Rājopādhyāyas, who are relatives of the present Taleju priests.[26] The hero of this story is Viśvanātha, the son of Gayaḥbājyā (see above fn. 6). He was the *purohita* and Tantric preceptor of King Siddhinarasiṁhamalla, who ruled Patan from 1597 to 1619. Viśvanātha, the story goes, found the goddess in the form of a stone in the Nakhu River, which in those days flowed next to the present location of the temple. The nearby pond is said to be a remnant of this river. Viśvanātha and a certain Pūrṇānanda Svāmī, who is said to have come from Bengal, erected this temple with the help of the Malla king and other patrons. All the Rājopādhyāyas of Patan go to this temple and perform *digupūjā* in conjunction with their *smārta* rites of passage, especially when their sons are given the sacred thread (*vratabandha*) and when they marry. They do not worship their *digu* otherwise.

Large numbers of people, including many from Kathmandu whose ancestors lived in Patan, come to this temple during the season in which the *digu* is worshipped to perform the rites, using the stone in the temple as a substitute for their own *digu* stones. Research has revealed that as many as half the upper caste families of Patan worship their *digu* here.[27] The number of people who make use of this stone in this way is so large that during the *digupūjā* season they often have to wait a long time before their turn comes, and when it does they only have time to perform a brief

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[23] The other temple is associated with the Kirantis of eastern Nepal, a people who are perhaps descendants of the Kirātas who appear in many Newar legends as the earliest known rulers of the Kathmandu Valley. Slusser informs us that "there are two sites in Patan where the Kiranti maintain traditional ties. One of these, the Siddhilakṣmī temple near Tyagal-tol, attracts certain Kiranti families for the annual worship of their clan god, the *Kuladevatā (degu, devālī)*" (Slusser 1982: 96). Although the local people do refer to the temple as one of Siddhilakṣmī, the icon is not at all that of this goddess. Moreover, no inscription found on or near the temple refers to the deity in it as being this goddess.

[24] See plates 1-2 and explanatory notes.

[25] Up to recent times, there were six lineages of Rājopādhyāyas in Patan, collectively called the Six Families (*ṣaṭkula*). They are all connected with Pūrṇacaṇḍī. The six families are:

1) Balimā, Patukva and Gābahāl. These three belong to one family. They are descendantsof three brothers who took up residence in these three places in Patan.

2) Sulimā.

3) Valā, also called Valānimā.

4) Svatha. Their Tantric shrine (*āgaṁ*) is in the Mucheṁ quarter of Patan.

5) Tāḥraṁlivi.

6) Nugaḥ. This lineage came to an end three or four generations ago.

[26] I was told this story by Nūtan Śarmā, a Valā Rājopādhyāya, who heard it from his grandmother who belongs to the Valānimā lineage of Rājopādhyāyas.

[27] Nūtan Śarmā has made a survey of more than 6,500 houses in Patan as a part of his doctoral research. This fact is one of his many findings. I am grateful to him for this information.

digupūjā. The animals which are customarily sacrificed may be cooked and eaten in one of the two rest houses located in the vicinity specially for this purpose. This appears to be a unique case.

There are many examples of temples containing stones which serve as a substitute for *digu* stones. But normally in such cases the original *digu* stones are located elsewhere. This alternative is available to those families who have moved far from their original homes where their *digu* is located and find it hard for them to go there to worship it. Pūrṇacaṇḍī / Siddhilakṣmī plays a similar role, with the important difference that, in the form of a stone, this goddess functions as the *digu* directly for those families who have no other stone.

There is an old inscription on the temple wall which establishes that the temple was indeed constructed during the reign of Siddhinarasiṁhamalla. This means that this unique custom cannot predate the middle of the seventeenth century, unless there were other such stones, or indeed this one itself was being used for this purpose. If the legend concerning the finding of the stone in the Nakhur River is true, then the latter hypothesis can be discarded.

The reason why all this is possible is because the *digu* stone is just a temporary dwelling place of the lineage deity. Thus an essential preliminary to *digupūjā* is the invocation of the presence of the lineage deity into the stone. This can be done even when the stone is already 'occupied' by another deity. Indeed, Newars frequently invoke the presence of deities in various objects, including ritual diagrams, jars, and the other implements used in the ritual, sacrificial offerings, the place where the rite is performed, the sacrificial fire, themselves as priests[28] and in other people. Deities may even be invoked into icons of other deities.[29] Despite much controversy concerning this matter, after study of the rituals involved[30] and penetrating enquiry, there can be no doubt that the higher castes invoke their lineage goddess into the *digu* stone.[31] One or more

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[28] When powerful, secret deities need to be taken out in procession during festivals, bundles are carried around the processional route. The general public is led to believe that they contain the 'original' form of the deity. At times there are two such mysterious bundles, thus adding further to the confusion and speculation. Even seasoned western researchers have been caught up in such 'intrigues'. Referring to the famous New Year's festival - Bisket Yātrā - in Bhaktapur, Vergati tells us that: "crushed in a large crowd I could watch what was happening in the Main Chowk [of the royal palace where Taleju's shrine is located] at the time of *Bisket jātrā* but I was never able to see the box which reputedly contains the *yantra* of the goddess Taleju" (Vergati 1995: 9). But even if Vergati had been able to see the box or even its contents, she would not have seen the deity because in actual fact, in this case as in many other such instances, the deity is not in what is being carried but within the person who carries it. Prior to his emergence in the public space the bearer has mentally extracted the deity or a part of it from its hidden location and projected it into his heart where it is safe and well hidden.

[29] This is why Siddhilakṣmī or Pūrṇacaṇḍī may not be the identity of the lineage deity of the families who worship their *digu* in the temple of Pūrṇacaṇḍī referred to previously. It is common practice amongst Newars, especially if they wish the identity of the deity they are worshipping to be kept secret, to project the deity they are worshipping onto another one. In this way, it appears to the onlooker that a certain deity is being worshipped whereas, in fact, that deity simply serves as the vehicle of the deity that is really being worshipped.

[30] It may appear at first sight that there are no written liturgies for *digupūjā* or the rites performed at large festivals. But this is not the case for the higher castes at least. Thus the NGMPP has microfilmed a manuscript of the liturgy prescribed for the worship of the *digu* of the Malla kings, Dviṁmāju. The text is simply called *Dviṁmājupūjā* and is NGMPP reel no. B 703/7. In order to find the written liturgies for the secret rites performed in public festivals, one must first know the deities that are worshipped on these occasions and the rites performed at that time. During Bisket Yātrā, for example, the rite performed in secret in the Malla palace in Bhaktapur is centred on the ceremonial raising of a banner in honour of the goddess Siddhilakṣmī. Several manuscripts of this liturgy have been microfimed by the NGMPP. One is the *Siddhilakṣmīkoṭyāhutidhvajārohaṇavarṣavardhanavidhiḥ*, NGMPP reel no. A 249/4.

representations of this goddess (yantra and/or icon) are normally kept in a Tantric shrine, either a separate building (*āgañcheṁ*) or, more commonly, a room in the house (*āgaṁkuthi*) set aside for this purpose.

The main officiant for this rite is the lineage elder - the *thakāli* . If he is not initiated or unable, the rite may be performed by another senior member of the lineage. But if none have been initiated, it must necessarily be done by the lineage priest, who may be a Brahmin or, more commonly for such rituals, a Karmācārya.

As I have noted already, the lower castes who are not allowed to take Tantric initiation worship non-Tantric deities (and in some cases Bhairava) in the *digu* stone. The rites may also be done by a Karmācārya or a Brahmin for them, but it is much more usual for them to do it for themselves. Even though they do not take initiation from a Brahmin, they also maintain a room or shrine where an image of the deity is kept. But in many cases the identity of the deity is not kept as scrupulously secret as it would be by the higher castes.

I believe that all these facts make sense if we postulate the existence of an original cutural substratum or substrata which predate the introduction of Buddhism and Hinduism. I believe the form of this core culture may be discerned, to some degree at least, by examining the practices and beliefs that cannot be traced to the Sanskrit texts, Buddhist or Hindu, those practices, that is, that are not Indian. This does not, of course, exclude other possible influences, but these appear to be minor compared to those from India. The society, culture and religion of the farmer castes (*jyāpu, maharjan*) appears in many respects to coincide most with this ancient core, although it has undergone a steady process of Sanskritization for many centuries. As Gellner writes:

> It is remarkable that although nearly all other Newar caste sub-groups have a myth which traces their origin to somewhere else, usually India, the Maharjans have no such myth. Even at the level of the sub-caste within one city there appear to be no such myths. As distinct from this, specific lineages do of course often have traditions which record their migration from some other place within the Valley. Thus, not claiming to come from outside, the Maharjans have been seen to be the true locals. This has led some observers to see them as descendents of the original inhabitants of the Valley and to look for ancient survivals in their culture and social practices. (Gellner 1995: 160)

This older religion appears to have been strongly centred on ancestor worship which was based on the belief that people, both men and women, acquire the status of deity as they grow old. Accordingly, Newars still undergo three succesive rites of passage (called *burā jaṁkwa)* every ten years from the time they reach the age of 77 years 7 months 7 days 7 *ghaṭī*s (2 hours 48 minutes) and 7 *pala*s (2 minutes 48 seconds). After this ritual a person "leaves the world of men for that of the gods" (Vergati 1995: 12). If he lives to undergo the third ritual passage he is belived to be fully deified. Thus the very first member of the clan was the most senior, the most divine. I believe,

[31] Vergati writes concerning *digupūjā*: "The annual ceremony always takes place according to the following schema: the *pūjā* begins with a meditation by all the members of the lineage who, in their minds, focus on the image of their chosen deity. The head of the lineage (or the ritual specialist) invites the deity to take its place in the stones. An animal victim is then slaughtered..." (Vergati 1995: 55f.). A little further on she describes this procedure in greater detail: "Those who participate in the *pūjā* stand facing the stones. The officiant is in front of them, also facing the stones. All are bare-headed, with hands joined at chest level, fingers pointing to the ground. The participants attempt to visualize the image of the deity and to project it into the stone. Before the silent meditation (*āvāhana* [that is, invocation]) which lasts several minutes, the *digu dyaḥ* stone is only a stone: afterwards, it is the seat of the divinity throughout the duration of the ceremony" (ibid. 57).

although no immediately apparent trace of this belief survives, that he was the original deity whose presence was invoked in the *digu* stone.[32] Whether this is true or not there can be no doubt that from the start this religion was domestic. The domestic unit was not the family, not even the extended joint family, as in India, but the *phuki* - the group of closely related patrilineal families. I suggest that the priests of the *phukis* were the most aged members. They performed the rites of passage for the *phuki* members and the worship of the *phuki's* deities.

Another important surviving feature of this religion is the worship of protectors. They are the original forms of the Gaṇeśas who protect each locality, the Bhairavas who protect whole towns and villages or large areas of them, the Mothers who encircle human settlements, and others. Like the *digu* deities, they have iconic counterparts which are usually kept apart except on certain occasions when the two are brought together. In Newari the Bhairavas and the Mothers can be generically referred to as Āju (lit. 'grandfather') and Ājimā (lit. 'grandmother'), implying, it seems, that some of them, at least, were believed to have originally been deified human beings. Thus, according to Newar legend, some of the Bhairavas were originally kings who, as deities, continue the royal function they perform as human beings of protecting their people.[33]

All these beings were, and still are, worshipped in stones. The Sanskritized name for such stones is, appropriately, *pīṭha,* which literally means 'seat'. While the *digu* stones (which are never referred to as *pīṭhas*) originally marked the location of the *phuki* and so are moveable and had human origin, the *pīṭha* stones are markers and delineators of place common to the community as a whole. They were not placed in their locations but discovered there. They protect larger or smaller areas, according to their status, function and location, all three of which are interrelated. Thus some mark and protect areas that together cover the whole Valley. Others protect villages, sectors of towns, the roads, crossroads, houses and courtyards, even refuse dumps. Such stones are to be found everywhere, both in the countryside and - where they are particularly profuse - in human settlements. These stones are, indeed must be, worshipped by those who live close to them. Occasionally the inhabitants of a town or village decide that they should worship all the stones in

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32 I say this fully conscious of how controversial this view is. Thus Ishii writing about the Newar village of Satungal says: "Although the *digu dyaḥ* is the deity of the lineage there is not the slightest suggestion of what one finds in other cultures, that the lineage god is a deified ancestor. Neither the legends about the early settlers of Satungal nor the *śrāddha* ceremony is related to this deity. Moreover, in some cases, the same *digu dyaḥ* is worshipped by many groups not patrilineally related, though all patrilineally related people worship the same *digu dyaḥ* " (Ishii 1995: 146). In reply one could say that *srāddha* rites belong to a separate ritual dimension. And we have seen that the same stone may be the abode of different lineage deities for different people. It is possible that the ancestral origin of the *digudyaḥ* and of the other ancient deities of the early inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley has been forgotten.

33 Anderson (1975: 156) writes that: "The estimated five million Bhairab images in Nepal are seen in sixty-four different manifestations and forms depicting his combined human, demonic and animal characteristics." These sixty-four manifestations are the male counterparts of the sixty-four yoginīs. This purely Tantric representation also depicts both the Bhairavas and their consorts as divinized human beings, that is, perfect Tantric adepts (*siddha*) and the female adepts with which they unite. Here, as in many other instances, the representations of the Sanskrit scriptures coincide in principle with popular local beliefs. The human origin of one of the major Bhairavas in Kathmandu illustrates this thesis. He is represented by five small stones in an open temple site near the Bagmati River between Tripureśvara and Kālīmaṭī, just south of old Kathmandu. The Newars, Anderson informs us, "conforming with legends in which many Bhairabs are identified as various Nepalese kings, say Pachali is the name of one such sovereign who ruled from Farping village near Chobar Gorge" (ibid. 158). Another myth represents Pacali Bhairava as belonging to the Jyāpu farmer caste and his lover a Khasai (butcher) girl. Chalier-Visuvalingam has published a lengthy and very detailed article on the cult of Pacali Bhairava to which the reader is referred (see bibliography).

which deities or other beings reside. When this took place in Patan in 1989 Gutschow counted 442 of them.[34]

An important clue to the manner in which this earlier religion, centred on the worship of such stones, is incorporated into the Sanskritic religions of India, both Hindu and Buddhist, is the ritual that takes place when the iconic counterparts of the stones are brought to them. This rite is essentially a form of installation (*prāṇapratiṣṭhā*) of the deity into the stone and the icon (or its representation), followed by worship. We witness here the symbiosis of the earlier and later religions. The stone draws its life force (*prāṇa*) from the icon and the icon from the stone. The two must therefore, at some time at least, be worshipped together. This may take place just once a year or more often, according to custom. In the case of the royal goddess Taleju, the stone which is the *digu* of the Malla kings (Dviṁmāju) must always be worshipped along with its equivalent iconic form and vice versa even in the course of the daily rites (*nityapūjā*). These rituals always involve the invocation of the deity (*āvāhana*), which can be considered, in some respects, to be a reduced form of the fully developed rite of installation. We observe in this way how the Sanskrit mantras, and especially the powerful Tantric mantras, used in such rites sanskritize the earlier aniconic forms and how these latter are reaffirmed in their function of contributing their energy to the empowerment of the deities with which these mantras originate. Thus the ancient guardians of the Newars become the attendants of the Tantric goddesses of the higher castes, empowering them even as they are empowered by them to perform their functions as protectors of place and lineage.

The sources of the history of the development of these forms of Tantrism amongst the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley include the common sources of any aspect of Nepalese history, namely, inscriptions, chronicles, the records of land grants, business transactions, corporate trusts (*guṭhis*) and the colophons of manuscripts containing dates or dateable references. But particularly important, and as yet virtually untouched, are the immense number of liturgical works (*paddhati*, *pūjāvidhi*) the Newars have written to regulate, in part at least, their very many and often extremely extensive, esoteric ritual procedures. Indeed, along with ethnological and historical studies, a study of these texts, together with the Tantras that are their primary literary sources, is essential in order to understand the specific form Newar Śāktism has assumed over the past thousand years since its introduction into the Valley from India.

These Hindu texts (I am not concerned with Newar Buddhism) can be broadly classified, in terms of this enquiry, into three basic types:

1) Those liturgies that are constructed entirely from materials drawn from Tantric sources, that is, from texts written in Sanskrit called Tantras or synonyms of that term.

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34 Gutschow writes:

The irreversible character of urban space is closely linked to the idea that essentially the quality of 'place' reveals itself through aniconic representations of gods and goddesses, namely, Gaṇeśa, Bhairava, and Durgā. In Patan there are altogether 442 such representations, which are collectively called pigā, as the specific connotation remains mostly vague. These pigā are unhewn stones, which emerge out of the ground and reach eventually a height of one or two meters; or they are flat stones, integrated into the regular pavement of squares and streets. These stones have first been discovered or 'found' by ritual specialists through Tantric power and in many cases the legends tied to this discovery have survived and form the base for a ritual reenactment of that detection of the sacred (Gutschow 1995: 112ff.).

One may hazard the suggestion that these discoveries are more often than not colonizations of the earlier, autochthonous, deities in the stones by their Tantric counterparts brought about by these Tantric ritual specialists. Thus what Gutschow explains as the "aniconic infrastructure of the town" that represents "the power of the place which enables people to live there" (ibid.) has become a network of Tantric energies wielded by the protectors of place.

2) Those liturgies which contain, usually in very moderate degrees, passages drawn from the Vedas which, Newar Brahmins insist, can only be recited by them. These are important but relatively few.
3) Those liturgies that contain in varying degrees material drawn from other sources that are not in written form. These include an immense range of ritual activity that appears to be derived from local custom. It is worth noting that very little of this activity is, in the form it is at present, intrinsically articulate. When something is said, the speaker makes use of a language which is not local, namely, Sanskrit, even if it is usually quite corrupt and, not uncommonly, mixed with Newari. In order to avoid the controversial term 'tribal', one could call these sources, simply, non-Sanskritic.

For the sake of clarity, it is worth stressing that there is also a great deal of ritual activity that takes place 'without a book', as the Newars put it. This may also be to varying degrees Sanskritic in the sense that it is both guided by the religious notions and pantheon common to Hindus throughout South Asia and/or related to forms of the sacred that are local and, therefore, non-Sanskritic. Although such non-literate ritual activity is important and, statistically, constitutes a considerable amount of the ritual activity Newars engage in, that done 'with a book' is considered to be the most powerful, however great the non-Sanskritic elements it may contain.

If we examine these liturgies referring to the simple three-fold classification outlined above, we notice that the basic structure, even of those of the third type, is the one which is most coherently and systematically elaborated in the first type, to which belong liturgies constructed entirely from materials drawn from Tantric sources. In this tangible and direct manner Tantrism serves as a vehicle of Sanskritization at the very core of Newar culture, radically rooted as it is in religion that is to a very large degree ritualistic. In this and other ways, notably its art, Tantrism is a ubiquitous part of Newar culture. For high-caste Newars, and to proportionately varying degrees as one descends the hierarchy of the Newar caste system, insofar as the degree of access to these rites is a measure of caste status, esoteric Tantric rites combine with domestic rituals including, as we have seen, the *smārta* rites of passage and the worship of lineage deities (*digudyaḥ*). They also form an invariable part of civic festivals. In both cases they perform the essential function of energizing them from 'within' to render them effective. This esoteric Sanskritic dimension of Newar religious culture is most developed amongst the higher castes because only they are allowed to take the initiation which authorizes them to perform and attend the purely Tantric rituals in their most complete form belonging to the first group. The upper sections of the lower castes have access to such rituals, although these are centred on deities who serve as attendants of the esoteric deities of the higher castes.[35] Moreover, as one goes down the caste hierarchy, rituals tend to contain, as one would expect, greater proportions of non-Sanskritic elements. Although not prominent in the esoteric Tantric rituals of the higher castes, they do make their appearance in some of the more elaborate occasional Tantric rites of even Newar Brahmins.

Another distinguishing feature of the esoteric religion of the higher castes in relation to the more exoteric religion of the lower is that the former is centred on the worship of goddesses, while the equivalent religion of the lower castes concentrates more on their male equivalents. I must stress that I am contrasting the esoteric religion of the high castes to which access can only be had through initiation with that of the lower castes who are not entitled to take such initiations.

But rather than examine the development of Newar Tantrism that has taken place at the hands of the Newars themselves as reflected by these liturgical works, I wish instead to explore some of the salient features and developments of the specifically Tantric traditions that are their original and most authoritative Sanskrit sources. In order to do this I will focus primarily on the

[35] These attendants - for the most part one or other of the Eight Mothers who surround and protect Newar settlements - are identified by initiates with the great lineage goddesses, especially Kubjikā, because they are emanated from them.

Tantras and related material pertaining to the early period of the development of Kaula Tantrism, that is, prior to the thirteenth century of the current era.[36] This is because, although the Newars continued to absorb forms of Tantrism from North India throughout the period of the development of Hindu, especially Śākta, Tantrism in that region, the Tantric traditions of the early period centred on the goddesses Kubjikā, Kālī and Tripurā have remained by far the most dominant sources for them.[37]

Amongst these three goddesses two are especially important. One is Kubjikā because she appears, from the field work done so far, to be the goddess of most, if not all, of the higher-caste priests of the Hindu Newars. This is certainly true in Bhaktapur. It is probably for this reason, and insofar as it is the priests who have made the liturgies, that Kubjikā functions in innumerable ways, which are still the objects of research, as the energizing centre of the Newar esoteric Śākta pantheon.[38]

The other goddess is Kālī. Although goddesses have numerous forms, as do South Asian deities in general, some of Kālī's forms have especially well-defined identities. Three of these figure prominently in Newar esoteric Śāktism. These are Dakṣiṇakālī, Guhyakālī and

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36 It is possible to distinguish two great periods of development of Hindu Tantric traditions. The dividing line between them are the works of the monistic Kashmiri Śaiva exegetes beginning with Vasugupta (ninth century) and ending with Jayaratha (thirteenth-century). Foı uncertain reasons, of which I believe the major one to be the disruption brought about by the progressive Muslim conquest of North India, there was a sudden catastrophic break in most of the lineages of the major Tantric traditions in northern India in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Most of the Tantric traditions that survived this break were those found in South India at that time. One major exception of particular importance for this study is the Kubjikā cult, which by this time was, it seems, well established amongst the Newars in the Kathmandu Valley and has continued to develop there since then. Another is the cult of Tripurā.

The new Tantrism that developed after this period in northern India was dominantly Śākta, that is, centred on goddess cults. A great deal of the contents of these cults were built up from the vague memories of the earlier ones that had been lost but which were generally more extensively and systematically developed than their successors.

37 The group of Ten Goddesses, the so-called Daśa Mahāvidyā, which became a very important configuration of divine forms in North India from about the seventeenth century onwards, are well known to the Newars. They even figure in the sacred geographies of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. From what I have been able to gather from interviews, they are also to be found in some of the rooms or chapels (*āgañ*) of higher caste initiates where they worship their Tantric family goddesses (*kuladevatā*). Apart from the aniconic stones in which they reside (*pīṭha*) encircling Kathmandu and Patan, some of them have temples. One important temple is dedicated to the goddess Bagalāmukhī. It is located in the temple complex of Kumbheśvara in Patan. Framed paintings of all ten of the Daśa Mahāvidyās adorn the upper part of the outer walls.

38 One striking example of the way this is done is found in most of the Newar liturgies of all these Kaula goddesses. The initial purification of the hands and body of the officiant that must precede all Tantric rituals is done by mentally projecting mantras onto the body. This transforms the body, speech, and mind of the officiant into that of a deity and so renders him fit to worship the deity. The mantra for this process (technically called *nyāsa* - lit. 'deposition') is invariable Kubjikā's Thirty-Two-Syllable Vidyā (the Newars call it '*battīsī*' which literally means 'thirty-two-(syllabled) one'). The Kaula initiation which is most popular in Bhaktapur is called the *Vasiṣṭhadīkṣākarmapaddhati* (which is probably a misnomer for *Viśiṣṭadīkṣākarmapaddhati*). I was given a copy by a Bhairavācārya of Bhaktapur. The preparatory phases of the initiation which render the disciple fit to receive the mantra of his or her lineage goddess require that the teacher project the mantras of Kubjikā onto the disciple's body. This is invariably the case regardless of the identity of the lineage goddess of the person receiving initiation. The basic identity of the initiate as a ritual agent is here clearly revealed to be Kubjikā. I plan to deal extensively with this important and complex aspect of Newar Śāktism in future publications.

Siddhilakṣmī.[39] Especially the last two are so well defined that even though they are both forms of Kālī, they possess separate and extensive Tantras of their own from which the basics of their cults, that is, their maṇḍalas and mantras, are drawn. These Tantras are the *Guhyakālītantra*[40] along with the *Mahākālasaṁhitā*[41] and the *Jayadrathayāmala*,[42] respectively. Of these two Siddhilakṣmī

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[39] The correct Sanskrit name of this goddess is Siddhalakṣmī, but she is known to the Newars as Siddhilakṣmī. As these are her last and if not her only worshippers, certainly they are the most important ones left, I prefer the Newari form to which I am, anyway, habituated.

[40] According to Divākarācārya, whom I gratefully acknowledge for the information, there is a fourteenth-century palm leaf manuscript of this Tantra preserved in the Kaisar Library in Kathmandu. Another incomplete manuscript has been microfilmed by the NGMPP from a private collection. The root mantra of Guhyakālī is taken from this Tantra. This is the form of the mantra used in the worship of Guhyakālī at night (*niśārcana*) which takes place at the conclusion of her procession (*yātrā*) from the Taleju temple in Kathmandu to her main temple in the Paśupati area (see Michaels 1994 for details). The liturgy (the text of which is called *Guhyeśvarīniśārcanavidhiḥ*, NGMPP reel no. A 948/4) is centred on the Secret (*guhya*) Kālī's secret identity, namely, Kubjikā, or, to be more precise, Kubjikā's Weapon. The form of the mantra itself confirms this identity by addressing the goddess as Guhyakubjikā as follows:

OM GUHYAKUBJIKE HŪṀ PHAṬ MAMA SARVOPADRAVĀYA YANTRAMANTRATANTRA-CŪRṆAPRAYOGĀDIKAṀ YENA KṚTAṀ KĀRĀYITAṀ KARIṢYATI TĀN SARVĀN HANA HANA DAṀṢṬRĀKARĀLI HREṀ HRĪṀ HŪṀ HREṀ HŪṀ PHAṬ GUHYAKUBJIKĀYAI SVĀHĀ

The mantra is found in the tenth chapter of the KMT. By omitting OṀ and SVĀHĀ the Sword Weapon (*khaḍgāstra*) mantra is formed. This is the mantra of one of Kubjikā's Maids (*dūtī*), namely, that of the Weapon. She is identified with Guhyakālī, also known as Guhyeśvarī. The KMT goes on to inform us that the source of this mantra is the separate, independent (*svatantra*) Tantra called *Guhyakālī* consisting of 125,000 verses. (KMT 10/20-30) This means not only that the cult of Guhyakālī pre-existed the KMT, but that it was colonized by the Kubjikā cult at a very early period of its development. As there is at least one Nepalese manuscript of the KMT belonging to the first half of the eleventh century (see below), we know that this must have taken place by that time.

[41] Wright's *History of Nepal* (1966: 148) refers to a Trihutiya (i.e. Maithili) Brahmin called Narasiṁha Ṭhākur who was instrumental in inducing King Pratāpamalla to found the well-known Guhyeśvarī temple close to the Paśupatinātha temple near Kathmandu. This took place in 1654 A.D. According to this chronicle he found the spot where the goddess was located "having perused the book Mahākāla Sanhitā (sic.)". A similar reference is found in the *Rājavaṁśāvalī* (6: 4). The worship of Guhyeśvarī in the Valley in conjunction with Paśupati certainly predates the founding of this temple (Michaels 1994: 315). Indeed, the couple and their residence in the Valley are mentioned in several early Tantras, including those of the Kubjikā cult. She is known, for example, to the *Niśisaṁcāratantra*, of which there is a palm leaf manuscript (see bibliography). The text is written in old Newari script which may be as old as the twelfth century or earlier. But although the text is early, the exposition of the *pīṭhas* found in this text does not agree with that found in references from the *Niśisaṁcāra* quoted in Kashmiri works (see Dyczkowski 1988: 156 fn. 251). Several folios of this manuscript are missing; moreover, the order of the remaining ones is badly disarranged. The reference begins on the bottom line of the first part of the fourth folio in the serial order in which the manuscript was microfilmed. The unedited text reads:

nepāle saṁsthitandevaṁ paśunāṁmpatiriṣyate |
guhyeśvarīsamāyuktaṁ sthānapālasamanvitaṁ ||

The god who resides in Nepal is considered to be the lord of the fettered (i.e. Paśupati). He is linked to Guhyeśvarī and is accompanied by the guardian(s) of the place.

enjoys a place of special honour as the secret lineage goddess of the former Malla kings, known to the public as Taleju.[43] It is worth noting that even in the case of the cult of the goddess Siddhilakṣmī, despite her central role in Newar Śāktism, both in its most esoteric forms and its public manifestations, where she figures as Taleju, the goddess Kubjikā operates, as elsewhere in the rich complex of Newar Śāktism, as the primary source of power in numerous very secret, and hence especially powerful, ritual contexts. An example of this process is the secret connection that the Taleju priest establishes between the two goddesses. It is this connection and identification, enacted ritually at prime moments in the liturgical cycle, that keeps the king's goddess powerful. Thus the source of power and, ultimately, the most fundamental identity of Siddhilakṣmī - the lineage goddess of the king - is Kubjikā, the lineage goddess of his priest.

But despite her truly extraordinary importance for Newar Śāktas, the goddess Kubjikā, unlike the popular goddesses Kālī and Tripurā, is virtually unknown outside the circles of her Newar initiates in the Kathmandu Valley. Even so, the Kaula Tantras concerned with her cult are numerous and extensive, as is befitting of a goddess that has been given such prominence. Her virtually total obscurity outside Nepal does not mean that Kubjikā is a Nepalese goddess. The Newars have been surprisingly prolific as compilers of liturgical works for their own rituals, but there is, as yet, little evidence that they have composed Tantras of their own.[44] It appears from the

The *Mahākālasaṁhitā* has been published (see the bibliography). There are no early references to this text. Further research will disclose the degree of influence this Tantra, of which there are numerous Nepalese manuscripts, has exerted on the Newar cult of Guhyakālī.

42 This Tantra which, along with the *Manthānabhairavatantra* of the Kubjikā school, is the longest known in existence, extends for 24,000 verses. No part of it has yet been edited and published. It was well known to the Kashmiri Śaivites of the eleventh century who referred to it respectfully as 'Tantrarājabhaṭṭāraka' - King of Tantras. This was a major source of the Kashmiri Kālī cult (as Kālasaṁkarṣaṇī) as it is of the cult of the goddess Taleju (i.e. Siddhilakṣmī) for the Newars.

43 Referring to the goddess Kālī, Sanderson (1988: 684) states that: "the Newars, who maintain the early traditions of the region, preserve her link with the Northern Transmission. For them Guhyakālī is the embodiment of that branch of Kaulism. Linked with her in this role is the white goddess Siddhalakṣmī (always written Siddhilakṣmī in Nepal) one of the apotropaic deities (Pratyaṅgirā) of the Jayadrathayāmala and the patron goddess of the Malla kings (1200 - 1768) and their descendants." This statement is, I suppose, based on the study of Newar Kaula liturgies. Thus, without having to ask embarrassing questions the scholar has penetrated one of the Newars' most closely guarded secrets by studying their liturgies. This is a fine example of how the work of the anthropologist in the field can be usefully supplemented by that of the textual scholar. We may also note that if Sanderson is correct when he says that "Guhyakālī is the embodiment of the Northern Transmission" for the Newars, it follows that the Northern Transmission has been subordinated by them to the Western Transmission belonging to the goddess Kubjikā.

44 The *Kubjikopaniṣad*, although not technically a Tantra, is virtually so in much of its content. This text may have been produced by a Newar Brahmin. The Brahminical pseudo-Vedic character of the text is not only attested by the extensive quotations it makes from the *Atharvaveda* but by its own statement that "a worshipper of Kubjikā . . . should be a brahman from Parāśara's clan and a teacher in the school of Pippalāda-śaunaka as taught in the Atharvaveda" (*Kubjikopaniṣad* 10/2). The relatively late date of the text is indicated by the central place it gives to the Ten Mahāvidyās (see above fn. 36). That the text may well have been written by a Newar initiate who was acquainted with the worship of both Kubjikā and Siddhilakṣmī transpires from the central place given to Siddhilakṣmī as the most important of the Mahāvidyās and her identification with Kubjikā in her form as Siddhikubjī. By the time the Ten Mahāvidyās became popular in India, the worship of Siddhilakṣmī and other related goddesses outside the Kathmandu Valley had probably ceased. Moreover, the worship of Siddhilakṣmī as one of the Ten Mahāvidyās in the primary textual sources is very rare, if not unique to this text. Thus her place of honour as the greatest, most regal of these ten 'royal' goddesses, as they are described in this text, indicates that this text may well have

studies made so far that virtually all of the very many Tantras found in manuscripts in Nepal were laboriously copied and brought from outside the Kathmandu Valley. Despite the very rich sacred geography of the Kubjikā Tantras, Nepal is only very rarely mentioned. On the other hand, innumerable references in the texts clearly indicate that Kubjikā was originally an Indian goddess. Specifically, the Kubjikā Tantras frequently refer to her as the goddess of the land of Koṅkana, which corresponds to the long strip of land between the Western Ghats and the sea, and, even more specifically, to her connection with the city of Candrapura. Of the many places sacred to the goddess in India mentioned in her Tantras, only Candrapura is identified as the home (*veśman* lit. 'house') of the Western Transmission, which is that of the Kubjikā cult. The passage cited below goes so far as to identify the place with the goddess's maṇḍala, her most personal abode:

That, indeed, is the Western House (veśman) called the City of the Moon (Candrapura). This is the first maṇḍala and (first source of) authority for (the initiates) who recite mantras.[45]

We know of two Candrapuras that fit the descriptions found in the texts. One was an important town in what is now the Garwal district of the western Himalaya. Not far from it is a mountain called Candraparvata. Moreover, both these places are approximately to the west of Kailāsa - which is where these places are said to be located by the KMT, the earliest and root Tantra of the Kubjikā cult.[46] On the basis of this and other references, and because of the goddess's many associations with mountains, I have expressed the opinion in a previous publication that Candrapura was located somewhere in the Himalayas (Dyczkowski 1988a: 91). This was also the opinion of Goudriaan (Goudraain 1981: 52) but not of Schoterman (Schoterman 1982: 37) who preferred the South Indian location detailed below.

The other Candrapura is located in Goa, the ancient kingdom of Koṅkaṇa. Nowadays it is called Chandor, and it was the capital of the Śilāhāras, who ruled this area in the fourth century A.D., At the beginning of the eleventh century, the Kadambas of Goa under Ṣāṣṭhadeva (c. 1005-1050 A.D.) extended their authority over the whole of Goa, vanquishing the Śilāhāras. They moved the capital from Candrapura (Chandor) to Goapurī (Goa Velha) in about 1052.[47] The following passage from chapter 43 of the *Ṣaṭsāhasrasaṁhitā* confirms the connection between Candrapura and the Kadamba kings. The passage talks about an important founder figure called Siddhanātha (variously named, Oḍḍīsanātha, Tuṣṇīnātha, and Kūrmanātha in the text) and his advent to the city of Candrapura, of which the Tantra says:

There is a city there called Candrapura (the City of the Moon) with (many) citizens located on the beautiful and extensive shore of the western sea in the auspicious forest by the sea in the great land called Koṅkaṇa.[48]

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been written by a Newar Brahmin initiate who may have been one of the priests of the goddess Taleju / Siddhilakṣmī.

45 *etad vai paścimaṁ veśma candrapuryeti nāmataḥ* |
maṇḍalaṁ prathamedaṁ tu adhikāraṁ tu mantriṇām || (KKh 3/12)

46 *meroḥ paścimadigbhāge* | (KMT 1/59c)

47 S. Rajagopalan 1987: 3-4.

48 This and the following references are taken from my, as yet, unpublished critical editions. The original readings, where they differ from the edited text are in square brackets.
paścimasya samudrasya tīre ramye suvistare |||
koṅkaṇākhye mahādeśe sāgarasya [-rāya] vane śubhe |
tatra candrapuraṁ nāma nagaraṁ nāgarairvṛtam || (ṢaṭSS 43/27-8).

The text continues:

> *The king there was called Candraprabha and he belonged to the dynasty of the Kadambas. Like the king of the gods, he was the ruler of all the worlds.*[49]

The text goes on to relate how the king took initiation from the sage and was admonished by him to ensure that all his subjects did the same. The Tantra thus presents Kubjikā as a goddess of a royal cult, and she is indeed one of the Newars' royal goddesses. And there seems to be little reason to doubt that, at some stage in the early development of the tradition, Kubjikā was a South Indian goddess.[50] However, this South Indian Candrapura may not have been the goddess's original home. The earlier KMT does refer to the land of Koṅkaṇa but does not stress its importance in the emphatic manner the later Kubjikā Tantras do. In fact, as Heilijgers-Seelen (1994: 2) points out: "the texts themselves are inconsistent with regard to the place of origin of the Kubjikā cult, but the basic text [i.e. the KMT] seems to locate this place somewhere in northern India in the western regions of the Himalayas." The later Tantras, namely the *Ṣaṭsāhasrasaṁhitā* and the *Manthānabhairavatantra*, on the other hand, repeatedly stress the connection between Candrapura and Koṅkaṇa. These facts seem to indicate that the Kubjikā cult was, as Goudriaan says, "originally located in the Himalayan region" (Goudriaan 1981: 52). Subsequently, probably not much after it began (which was, probably in second half of the tenth century), the centre of the cult shifted to the mid-western costal regions of India where, by a fortunate coincidence or design, another Candrapura was located. That the cult was already established in central India by the eleventh century with its centre in this Candrapura is supported by the following inscription from Karṇaṭaka (Nelamangala tāluka) dated 1030 A.D. commemorating the founding of a Siddheśvara temple:

> At the foot of a wonderful tree in Candrapurī, [which is] situated by the western ocean, Ādinātha is installed. By merely recalling his excellent lotus feet, the residual effects of acts commited in past lives are destroyed. His disciple . . . was Chāyādinātha ["Shadow Ādinātha." His disciple was Stambhanātha]. . . . His son, versed in the meaning of the Kālāgama [i.e. Kulāgama], was the *yati* Dvīpanātha. . . . His disciple was born Mauninātha *munipa*. The bearer of the latter's commands was Rūpaśiva [the priest in charge of the temple] . . . devoted to the *Śaivāgama*.[51]

The *Śrīmatottara* similarly describes Candrapura as being close to mountains and the sea (*samudrasyopakaṇṭhe* 1/15c).

[49] *tatra candraprabho nāma rājā kadambavaṁśajaḥ [-vaṁsajaḥ]* |
śāsitā sarvalokānāṁ tridaśādhipatiryathā || (Ibid. 42/33)

[50] It is significant in this regard that Vidyānanda, a fourteenth-century South Indian commentator on the *Nityāṣoḍaśikārṇava* "seems to have possessed", as the editors of the KMT inform us, "a fair knowledge of the texts of the Kubjikā school because he repeatedly refers to them" (Goudriaan and Schoterman 1988: 18). Maheśvarānanda, who was a disciple of Vidyānanda and lived in the part of South India ruled at that time by the Cholas, quotes from Kubjikā sources in three places in his auto-commentary on the *Mahārthmañjarī* (two on p. 4 and one on p. 126). Although these references have not been traced in the KMT, he appears to have been acquainted with the Kubjikā Tantras which, although little known, must therefore have been in circulation in South India in the fourteenth century. For the few other references drawn from the KMT see Goudriaan and Schoterman 1988: 14ff..

[51] Quoted by White 1996: 94 from Saletore 1937: 20ff.

It is possible that the Rūpaśiva mentioned in this inscription is the same Rūpaśiva who wrote, or compiled, a commentary on sections of the *Ṣaṭsāhasrasaṁhitā* and the *Manthānabhairavatantra*. If so, we know from the colophon of his work that he resided at some time in Kashmir[52] and received initiation in Pravarapura (modern Shrinagar) where, as the colophon states, "the venerable Vitastā joins the Indus".[53] Although the Kubjikā cult was not popular in Kashmir, there is evidence attesting its presence there in the first half of the eleventh century.[54] We must be cautious however in making this identification because the *Ṣaṭsāhasrasaṁhitā* and the *Manthānabhairavatantra* themselves cannot be dated earlier than the beginning of the eleventh century, both of them apparently referring to major Muslim invasions. Thus, the latter text states that the demon Rāvaṇa incarnated in this Age of Darkness (*kaliyuga*) and descended onto the bank of the Indus (Dyczkowski 198a: 12, 98ff.). This may be a reference to the conquest of the Punjab by Mahmūd of Ghaznī which took place in the first quarter of the eleventh century.[55] The *Ṣaṭsāhasrasaṁhitā* adds that in that Age of Darkness: "the Kshatriyas, though broken in battle, will act as if they are [still] powerful."[56] We may accept this early date for the compiler of the commentary and identify him with the Rūpaśiva of the inscription, assuming that the early development of the Kubjikā Tantras and related literature took place in a relatively short span of time and that it spread comparably quickly. This may be one of the reasons for the confusion between the two Candrapuras in the texts. But whether the Kubjikā cult was introduced into Nepal from the Western Himalaya as Hielijgers-Seelen (1994: 2) asserts or not is a matter for further research.

Nowadays, almost all the manuscripts of the Kubjikā Tantras and related works are in Nepal or are of Nepalese origin. The text with by far the greatest number of manuscripts is the KMT. Sixty-six manuscripts, complete and fragmentary, of the KMT have been found and examined by the editors of the KMT. This is truly a massive number for any sort of text, especially Tantric, and represents yet another measure of the immense popularity and importance of the Kubjikā cult amongst the Newars. All of these manuscripts except one, which is in old Maithili or Gauḍī script,[57]

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52 In the colophon of the MBT *ṭīkā* (fl. 186), the author says of himself that he is "the ornament (*tilaka*) of the venerable land of Kashmir and resides in the venerable town of Pravarapura (i.e. Shrinagar) -" (*śrīkāśmīradeśatilakabhūtaśrīpravarapurāntargata-*)

53 *-śrīvitastāsindhusaṅgame prārthanā prārthitā* [*prārthita*] *gṛhītā* I Ibid. fl.186.

54 See Dyczkowski 1987a: 7ff..

55 Mahmūd of Ghaznī became Sultan in 997 A.D. Soon after his coming to power, he began a series of raids on India from his capital, Ghaznī in Afghanistan. Historians disagree as to the exact number of these raids. According to Sir Henry Elliot, they were seventeen and took place almost every year (Smith 1995: 205) up to 1027 A.D. Although many of these incursions drove deep into the country, Mahmūd could do no more than annex the Punjab, or a large part of it, to the Ghaznī Sultanate (ibid.: 208).

56 ṢaṭSS 3/79cd. The translation is by Schoterman.

57 This is NAK MS no. 5-778/58 = NGMPP reel no. A 40/18. Mithilā is the most likely major entry point for the Sanskrit texts brought into the Kathmandu Valley. There are numerous links between the Newars and the inhabitants of Mithilā. These became especially close from the reign of Sthitimalla (1367-1395 A.D.). He married Rājalladevī, a member of the Bhaktapur royal family who was of Maithili origin. Indeed, scholars dispute whether Sthitimalla himself was from Mithilā. But whether he was or not, it is a significant fact that the later Malla kings boasted that they were of Maithili origins. The repeated attacks on the Valley from the beginning of the Malla period onwards by Maithili raiding parties demonstrate the ease with which the Valley could be penetrated from Mithilā. Again, Slusser (1982: 395) informs us that "the script employed after the fourteenth century, now designated simply as 'Newari', is closely related to the writing of Mithilā". This fact is not only indicative of the close connection between the literate culture of the two peoples, it also renders the transition of a text from India through Mithilā very easy. It is not impossible that some old manuscripts thought to be written in old forms of Newari are actually Maithili manuscripts.

appear to be of Nepalese origin. The oldest of these manuscripts is a short recension of the KMT called *Laghvikāmnāya* copied by Suharṣajīva during the reign of Lakṣmīkāmadeva (1024-1040 A.D.) and is dated 1037-38 A.D.[58] The colophon of a manuscript of another Kubjikā Tantra, the *Kularatnoddyota*, informs us that the original manuscript from which it was copied was transcribed by a certain Vivekaratna who came to the Valley (*nepāladeśa*) and lived in Kathmandu during the reign of Harṣadeva,[59] who is believed to have reigned between 1085 and 1099 A.D. (Slusser: I, 398). Thus we can safely say that the cult of the goddess Kubjikā had not only reached the Valley by the beginning of the eleventh century but was already developing throughout it. Incidentally, it is worth noting that it appears from the form of Vivekaratna's name that he was a renunciate. Thus, although, as we have seen, Rājopādhyāya Brahmins became the centre and mainstay of the esoteric network of Newar Tantric Śāktism, this does not necessarily mean that they were the original propagators of it in the Kathmandu Valley. Even so, they may well have played an important role in its spread, as they certainly did in its application and adaptation to Newar culture and religious life.[60]

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[58] The manuscript is NAK no. 5-877/57 = NGMPP reel no. A 41/3. See the introduction to the edition of the KMT (p. 14), where the colophon is reproduced in full. Regmi (1965: 1965) has also referred to the same colophon.

[59] The manuscript is NAK no. 1/16 = NGMPP reel no. A206/10. It is a copy of a much older manuscript. The copiest copied it completely, including the colophon. The reference is on folio 96b and is as follows (the text has been emended. The original readings are in square brackets):

> *pakṣe śive cāśvinanāmadheye tithau tṛtīyāṁ dharaṇīsute'hni* |
> *śrīharṣadevasya ca vardhamāne rājye mahānandakare [-maṁdakare] prajānām* ||
> *nepāladeśaṁ samupāgatena kāṣṭhābhidhe * * * saṁsthitena* |
> *svaśiṣyavargasya nibodhanāya paropakārāya kṛtaprayatnaḥ* ||
> *bhaktyā svayaṁ śrīkularatnapūrvamuddyotayantaṁ [-mudyotasantaṁ] bṛhadāgamedam* |
> *śrīmatkulācāryavivekaratnakenāpi [śrīmatkalācārya-] saṁlekhitaṁ [-ta] paṇḍitena* ||

(The teacher) himself has come to the land of Nepal and resides in Kathmandu (kāṣṭhābhidha) and made an effort to instruct his disciples and help others. (He came) when Śrīharṣadeva's kingdom was prospering and gave great joy to the subjects (who resided there). (This effort was made and bore fruit in the form of this manuscript completed) on Tuesday (dharaṇīsute'hni), in the bright half (śivapakṣa) (of the lunar month of) Aśvin on the third lunar day.

This great Āgama which illumines the jewel of the Śrīkula was copied (saṁlikhitam lit. 'written') with devotion by the venerable Kulācārya and scholar Vivekaratna.

This reference informs us that Vivekaratna resided in *kāṣṭhābhidha*, that is, a '(place) called Kāṣṭha'. There seems little reason to doubt that he is abbreviating the Sanskrit name 'Kaṣṭhamaṇḍapa' which I have translated as Kathmandu. If the dating of the original of this manuscript is correct and it belongs to the 11th century, then this is the earliest reference so far recovered to the place which was to fuse with it neighbouring settlements and ultimately give its name, after several centuries, to the city formed thereby. Prior to my discovery of this colophon Slusser (1982: 89) informs us that when she was writing: "the first record of Kaṣṭhamaṇḍapa as a place name is encountered in a colophon dated A.D. 1143 (N.S. 263)."

[60] It is worth mentioning in passing that the rapid spread of this, and many other Tantric systems, may well be due to the large part peripatetic ascetics played in their propagation and, probably, in their original redaction. The original redactors and propagators of the Tantras, as the language of the texts shows, possessed only a basic and frequently defective, knowledge of Sanskrit. But even this could only have been acquired by those who had access to the language. In this period, there were only two types of people who would easily have had this privilege, namely male Brahmins and ascetics. I believe that the latter were prominent in the initial stages of the formation and propagation of a wide range of Tantric cults, including

So far there is no evidence for the existence of the cult of Tripurā in the Valley at this time. The reason for this may well be simply that the cult had not yet developed sufficiently in India. Early manuscripts of Śaivasiddhānta Āgamas and Pañcarātrasaṁhitās establish that the Tantric cults of Śiva and Viṣṇu prescribed by these scriptures existed alongside their Purāṇic equivalents which drew extensively from them. These forms of Tantrism continue to be popular in South India but gave way to Kaula Tantrism in Nepal. The Bhairava Tantras, another important category of early Śaivite Tantras, are exemplified by the (now exclusively Nepalese) manuscripts of the *Brahmayāmala* and the *Śrītantrasadbhāva*. Although these texts prescribe Bhairava cults, they are replete with rituals centred on the worship of the goddesses who are Bhairava's consorts. In this and in many other respects they represent a point of transition from the earlier Śaiva to the later Śākta cults.[61] The *Jayadrathayāmala*, to which we have already referred as the root Tantra of the cult of Siddhilakṣmī, considers itself to be a part of the Bhairava current.[62] And the *Śrītantrasadbhāva*, as we shall see, is an important source for the Kubjikā tradition.[63]

The *Śrītantrasadbhāva* is a Trika Tantra, that is to say, even though it is a Bhairava Tantra, as are all of the other Trika Tantras that are still extant or of which we know of from references, it describes and gives special importance to the worship of a Triad (which is the literal meaning of the word 'Trika') of goddesses, namely, Parā (lit. Supreme), Parāparā (lit. Supreme-cum-Inferior) and Aparā (lit. Inferior), who are worshipped along with their consorts the Bhairavas Bhairavasadbhava, Ratiśekhara and Navātman, respectively.[64] Sanderson succinctly defines the term Trika as follows:

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those we are discussing here. In the subsequent phases of domestication and institutionalization, Brahmins played more important roles and in many places, as in the Kathmandu Valley, they became dominant. An interesting and important hybrid, which nicely combines the two, is the renunciate Brahmin. This figure, although unknown in the Kathmandu Valley at present, was immensely important in the development of all forms of Tantrism in India.

61 I do not mean to say that the cults prescribed by these texts led an exclusive existence apart from others. There always was, as there is now, overlapping of any one cult with others. Many of the cults of the Bhairava Tantras may have predated a large part of those of the Śaivasiddhānta Āgamas. The follower of one may also have been initiated into those of the other. One could say that this tendency to blend together diverse cults is the practical consequence of the radical polytheism of Hinduism as a whole. By this I mean that Hindus, like the ancient Greeks, never worship a deity alone. He or she is always accompanied by others even though, unlike the Greeks, Hindus may perceive the deity as having an ultimate, absolute identity.

62 A typical colophon found at the end of each chapter (*paṭala*) of the *Jayadrathayāmala* reads: *iti bhairavasrotasi vidyāpīṭhe śiraśchede jayadrathayāmale mahātantre caturviṁśatisāhasare* '(this is a chapter of) the great Tantra, *Jayadrathayāmala*, (otherwise known as) the *Śiraścheda*, consisting of twenty-four thousand verses which belongs to the Seat of Knowledge of the Bhairava current'. See Dyczkowski (1987a) for a detailed discussion of the canon of the Śaiva Tantras and the classifications these works have devised for themselves. See also Sanderson (1988).

63 As we have noted already, nowadays and probably for at least six hundred years, the esoteric cults of upper- caste Newars are Śākta. One wonders whether prior to this the cults of the Bhairava Tantras played an equivalent role in some way, in the development of Newar Tantrism, of bridging the transition to the Kaula Tantras from the Śaivism of the more exoteric Śaivasiddhānta and Pāśupati cults which, along with the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra, represented the earliest forms of Hindu Tantrism in the Valley, as indeed they did in India.

64 This is according to TĀ 15/323b-329b. Abhinavagupta does not tell us the source of this configuration which, from the point of view of the Kubjikā cult, is anomalous. The Vidyā of the goddess Kubjikā is similar to that of the goddess Parāparā, as reported in the TĀ (see below). However, in her Tantras, of these three, Kubjikā's consort is invariably Navātman, never Ratiśekhara. Another important variant is in the form of the mantra of Navātman. According to Abhinavagupta (TĀ 30/11c-12b) this is

By the term Trika I intend an entity in ritual rather than theology. I refer to the cluster of Tantric Śaiva cults with a common system or 'pantheon' of Mantra-deities. The distinctive core of this pantheon (*yāgaḥ)* is the three goddesses Parā, Parāparā and Aparā and the two alphabet deities Śabdarāśi[-bhairava] (also called Mātṛkā[bhairava]) and Mālinī. (Sanderson 1990: 32)

Significantly Sanderson quotes a verse from a Kubjikā Tantra, the *Kularatnoddyota*, which we have already had occasion to mention above, to support his view.[65] The mantras of the three goddesses are given in the KMT,[66] while Kubjikā herself is occasionally identified with Siddhayogeśvarī, the principal goddess of the Trika system of the *Siddhayogeśvarīmata*, one of the foremost authorities for the Kashmiri Śaiva Trika.[67] In the passage quoted below, Kubjikā is equated with the three goddesses in the form of Aghorā, Ghorā, and Ghoratarā. The *Mālinīvijayatantra*, another important authority for Kashmiri Trika Śaivites, identifies them as hosts of energies that are emitted from the Trika goddesses.[68] The passage is drawn from the from the *Manthānabhairavatantra*:

RHKṢMLVYŪṀ. The prevalent form in the Kubjikā Tantras and the one used in Newar rituals is HSKṢMLVRYŪṀ.

65 *śabdarāśiśca mālinyā vidyānāṁ tritayasya ca* I
sāṅgopāṅgasamāyuktaṁ trikatantraṁ kariṣyati I See Sanderson 1990: 32. A translation of this important reference is found in Dyczkowski (1987a: 84). It reads:
The Trikatantra will be constructed by the conjunction of the parts primary and secondary, of the three Vidyās along with Mālinī and Śabdarāśi.

66 The Parā mantra according to KMT 18/30b-31 is HSRŪAUṀ. According to TĀ 30/27-28b it is SAUḤ. Abhinavagupta tells us two variant forms found in the *Triśirobhairavatantra* , namely: SHAUḤ and HSAUḤ. The mantra of Parāparā is recorded in TĀ 30/20-6a, also ibid. 16/213-6a, where the Vidyā is given in the reverse order. It consists of thirty-nine and a half syllables and is as follows:

OṀ AGHORE HRĪḤ PARAMAGHORE HUṀ GHORARŪPE HAḤ GHORAMUKHI BHĪMA-BHĪṢAṆE VAMA PIBA PIBA HE RU RU RA PHAṬ HUṀ HAḤ PHAṬ

The Parāparā mantra according to KMT 18/4-24 consists of forty-two and a half syllables. It is given in the *Śabdarāśi* code in reverse order and is as follows:

AIṀ AGHORE HRĪṀ HSAḤ PARAMAGHORE HŪṀ GHORARŪPE HSAUṀ GHORAMUKHI BHĪMABHĪṢAṆE VAMA VAMA PIBA PIBA HAḤ HE RU RU RA RA HRĪṀ HRŪṀ PHAṬ

The Aparā mantra according to TĀ 30/20cd is HRĪḤ HŪṀ PHAṬ. According to KMT 18/26b it consists of seven and a half syllables and is HE PA HA RU PHA PHAṬ. KMT 18/28b-29 presents a variant (*bheda)* of the same, namely, AIṀ HRĪṀ HRŪṀ PHREṀ HŪṀ PHAṬ.

Even though all three mantras in the two sources contain significant variants, we can say for both of the first two mantras, Parā and Parāparā, what Abhinavagupta says about Aparā, namely, that "even though it is basically the same, it presents itself in various ways" (TĀ 30/28a).

67 *devataiḥ pūjitā nityaṁ brahmacaryāparāyaṇaiḥ* I
siddhayogeśvarīkhyātāṁ śrīkujākhyāṁ namāmyaham II

I salute the venerable (goddess) called Kujā who is known as Siddhayogeśvarī and is perpetually worshipped by (all) the deities and by those intent on celibacy . (KKh 5/82)

68 *viṣayeṣveva saṁlīnānadho'dhaḥ pātayantyaṇūn* I
rudrāṇūn yāḥ samāliṅgya ghorataryo'parāstu tāḥ II

I salute the venerable (goddess) called Kujā who, residing in her own Wheel, is perpetually conjoined (with the Supreme Principle), she who is Ghorā, Ghoratarā and Aghorā, and is sustained by the knowledge of Ghora.[69]

The *Śrītantrasadbhāva* is an important Trika Tantra for the monistic Śaivites of Kashmir of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Abhinavagupta, who belongs to this period, refers to it as the source of a Kaula rite of initiation taught to him by Śambhunātha.[70] Abhinavagupta refers to him as his teacher in Trika Śaivism, which Abhinavagupta used as the focus of his massive synthesis of the Tantric systems prevalent in the Kashmir of his day and which he calls, extending the usage of the term in the Tantras, Trika. The *Śrītantrasadbhāva* is the source of the particular form of the mantras for the Trika goddesses found in the KMT, which incorporates three chapters of this Tantra.[71] This inclusion indicates that the author(s) of some part at least of the KMT had access to it. This suggests that he was an initiate into this system or into a cognate one that allowed access to this Tantra. Moreover, this person or group of people was certainly influenced by the Trika system of this work. I have gone into this matter in some detail because it is exemplary of a general principle, namely that most, if not all, Tantric systems are built up at their origins by initiates of other systems. As initiates they would have a firm belief in the power of the most important mantras of those other systems and will therefore naturally tend to incorporate them into the new system they are building. Mantras and seed syllables have power in themselves. They enjoy the independent existence and identity of deities along with their attributes and limbs which, indeed, they are said to be. The incorporation of mantras into a system is thus equivalent to the incorporation of iconic forms. Similarly, the permutations of single mantras are equivalent to the permutations of their corresponding iconic forms.

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miśrakarmaphalāsaktiṁ pūrvavajjanayanti yāḥ I
muktimārganirodhinyastāḥ syurghorāḥ parāparāḥ II
pūrvavajjantujātasya śivadhāmaphalapradāḥ I
parāḥ prakathitāstajjñairaghorāḥ śivaśaktayaḥ II (MV 3/31-3)

The Ghoratarā (energies), which are the lower (aparā) ones, embrace the Rudra (i.e. individual) souls. Having done so, they throw down (those) individual souls who are attached to the objects of sense to increasingly lower levels.

Those who, in like manner, cause (individual souls) to be attached to the fruits of mixed (good and bad) actions and block the path to liberation are the middling (parāparā) (energies called) Ghorā.

Those energies of Śiva who, as before, bestow the fruits of Śiva's abode on living beings are said to be the supreme (parā) ones which those who know (call) Aghorā.

According to Abhinavagupta the three goddesses Parā, Parāparā and Aparā correspond to the powers of will, knowledge and action, respectively. They generate these three categories of energy, the Aghorā, Ghorā and Ghoratarā, that function in these ways (see TĀ 3/71b-5a, 3/102b-4a).

69 *ghorā ghoratarāghorā ghorajñānāvalambinī* I
nityayuktā svacakrasthā śrīkujākhyāṁ namāmyaham II(KKh 5/79)

70 TĀ 29/211b-2a.

71 See the edition of the KMT by T. Goudriaan and J. A. Schoterman. Appendix V of this edition contains a survey of the significant variants between KMT chapters 4 to 6 and the *Śrītantrasadbhāva* chapters 3, 6, and 8. There are three manuscripts of the *Śrītantrasadbhāva*, all of them preserved in Nepal. They are NAK 5/445 (A.D. 1097), 1/363 and 5/1983. I have already established the priority in time of the Trika goddesses with respect to the Kubjikā Tantras in Dyczkowski 1987a: 83-85.

No Tantric system discovered to date is without similar precedents. The Śaivasiddhānta incorporates in a modified form the Paśupata iconography and mantras of five-faced Sadāśiva as a central part of its most original core.[72] Cults expounded in the Bhairava Tantras similarly draw from the Siddhānta, maintaining, in varying degrees, a connection with it. A clear example of this is the cult of Svacchandabhairava which, although a Bhairava cult, is very close to those of Sadāśiva in the Siddhāntāgamas and contains elements of Paśupata Śaivism.[73] It appears that these layers in the formation of the cult were discerned by the Newars in their own way leading to the esoteric identification of Paśupati with a form of Svacchandabhairava.[74]

The cults of the Bhairava Tantras included at least two species that were so strongly orientated towards the worship of goddesses that they were more Śākta (according to the later terminology) than Śaiva. These were the Kālī cults and those centred on the worship of the Three Goddesses. The next step was the move into another class of Tantra and cult. These were the Kula Tantras, which distinguished themselves from all the other types of Tantra by referring to themselves as Kaula and to the others as Tāntrika collectively. The Kubjikā Tantra represents a

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72 See Bhatt 1961: 22 ff. concerning the mantras of Sadāśiva's five faces.

73 Arraj has examined the history and structure of the *Svacchandatantra*, the root text of the Svacchandabhairava cult, at length in his doctoral dissertation. See bibliography. He discerns various strata in the history of the *Svacchandatantra*. These are: 1) *Śrauta* and *smārta* precepts and practice. 2) Rudra: Specifically, part of the *Śatarudrīya* has provided the *Bahurūpa* formula of *sakala*-Svacchandabhairava, used in the primary rituals throughout the Tantra (Arraj 1988: 31). 3) Vedic meta-ritualist and ascetic speculation. This includes meditation on *OṀ (praṇava)* and interiorized rituals focused on the vital breath. 4) Brahminical *śāstras*: Arraj sees similarities in the implicit theory of language with Bhartṛhari. Other *śāstras* include logic, astrology and medicine. Their presence is, however, not great. 5) Philosophical schools (*darśana*): These are, above all, Yoga and Saṁkhya, which have had great influence on the text. 6) Epics and Purāṇas: The influence of the Purāṇas is especially felt in the formulation of cosmologies. 7) Vaiṣṇava Pañcarātra: Its contribution may have been the modification of Saṁkhya cosmology through the addition of Māyā in the theistic scheme of emanation. 8) Paśupata : This includes what Arraj has listed separately as 'Rudra'. 9) Śaiva: This group Arraj rightly, I believe, identifies with the Śaivasiddhānta. Arraj and Dyczkowski (1987a: 139 fn. 24) point out that Brunner-Lachaux in her lengthy notes on her translation of the *Somaśambhupaddhati* frequently refers, especially in the section dealing with initiation in part 3, to the *Svacchandatantra* and compares it at length with the statements of the Siddhāntāgamas and their commentators.

74 Newar Kaulas worship Svacchandabhairava independently. But his most important role is as the consort of Kubjikā. He appears in this capacity in, for example, the important Bhairava fire sacrifice called *Bhairavāgniyajña*. In this context he is worshipped as Śikhāsvacchandabhairava. In this form he is the consort of Kubjikā when she is worshipped along with six goddesses who are her attendants (*dūtī*) and the embodiments of the six limbs of her mantra. Apart from innumerable references in Newar liturgies, several references to this form of Svacchandabhairava have also been found in inscriptions. I am grateful to Nūtan Śarmā for pointing this out to me. Even at the initial scriptural level, when the Tantra was compiled, Svacchandabhairava served an intermediary between the mild Sadāśiva of the Siddhānta and the fierce Bhairava of the Bhairava Tantras. Subsequently, in the course of the development of his liturgies amongst the Newars, he became the esoteric identity of Paśupati. In retrospect one could hazard to say that the identification was already an open possibility in the *Svacchandatantra*. Arraj notes a number of Paśupata influences in the formation of the cult at the scriptural level (Arraj 1988: 40-46). Especially important, I would say, is the close similarity in the identity of Svacchandabhairava's five faces and those of Paśupati, on the one hand, and Sadāśiva of the Siddhāntāgamas, on the other. Thus this cult, which is very important for Newar Śāktism, bridges the gap between Paśupati and Sadāśiva on one side and on the other serves as an intermediary between the Bhairava and the Kaula Tantric cults. The net result is that, as the consort of Guhyakālī who is worshipped secretly as an aspect of Kubjikā (see above, fn. 39), Paśupati is worshipped secretly as Śikhāsvacchandabhairava in conjunction with Kubjikā.

major point of transition between these two modalities. The dictates of the cult appear in many respects to be in an intermediate and mediating phase between the two. The cult of the goddess Kubjikā is, as the Tantras of her cult tirelessly remind us, fully Kaula. Even so, they take care to recall the link with the earlier Bhairava Tantras. The goddess and her tradition is 'established in Śiva's sphere' (*śāmbhava maṇḍalasthā*). We are frequently told that the Kubjikā cult appears 'at the end of the Kali Age' (*kalisyānte*). This appeared to be such an important feature of the Kubjikā cult that the KMT named it the Paścimāmnāya, literally the 'Last (or Final) Tradition' of the Kaula cults. Still, the initiate is admonished to respect and even worship the 'previous tradition' (*pūrvāmnāya*). This consisted, collectively, of all the earlier Kaula schools. These were believed to be the earliest ones, all of which were derived from Matsyendranātha and his six disciples. As the system developed after the redaction of the KMT, the name Paścimāmnāya remained but the word *paścima* came to be understood as meaning 'western', which is its other common meaning. This was facilitated by the development of the parallel Kālī cult which referred to itself as the Uttarāmnāya - lit. 'Northern Tradition' or 'Higher Tradition', possibly because it did, in reality, develop in the North of India, specifically in Kashmir and the neighbouring Himalayas. As the Paścimāmnāya developed it came to incorporate Kālī to increasing, albeit moderate, degrees.[75] However, this element, along with the addition, at a still later period, of Tripurā cults,[76] does not form a part of the essential core of the system.

The form Tantrism has assumed amongst the Newars in the Kathmandu Valley is deeply relevant to our enquiry, not only because Kubjikā, who is the prime focus of this paper, has been made central and fundamental to the whole of Newar Śāktism, but also because Newar Śāktism is a direct (although, of course, not the only possible) historical development of processes of synthesis and syncretism that were already at work in the development of the Tantras and their cults. In the rest of this paper I will examine some features of the exchanges, mutual influences, common forms, and specific identities of these cults in relation to one another and individually that characterize

[75] We have already observed the manner in which the KMT colonized the cult of Guhyakālī. Also, see below.

[76] The goddess Kāmeśvarī is known to the KMT. She is said to reside in Kāmarūpa where Kubjikā meets her in her colonizing tour of the Indian subcontinent described in chapter 2. The following is a summary of the relevant passage. The goddess goes to a place called Kāmika. There is a river there called Ucchuṣmā which is in the forest of Mahocchuṣma. There is a lake there with the same name together with another one called Nīla. The goddess sports on both sides of the banks (of these lakes?). Again the goddess (Kubjikā), whose limbs are the universe and the principles of existence, sees a goddess there who is "proud with the pleasure of passion (*kāma*) and burning with the Lord of Love (*vasantatilaka*). She is melting and melts the three worlds with (her) desire." Seeing her the Mother smiles and asks her who she is and how she has come there. She calls her "passionate one" and is pleased with her for having shown her all these wonderful things. She tells her that she should be called Kāmeśvarī because in this way she has obtained the fruit of the bliss of passion. Out of compassion the form of passion (*kāmarūpa*) has been fashioned before her and so this great sacred seat (where the goddess Kāmeśvarī resides) which is called *Kāmarūpa* will come into existence during the Kali Age. Her consort will be Candrānanda. He will be seated on the shoulders of the Wind. Passionate, he will be Kāmadeva (KMT 2/82 - 94). The Tripurā cult has incorporated Kāmeśvarī into the early prototype of Tripurā so well that most initiates into the Tripurā cult would not be able to distinguish the two. The relative antiquity of the Kubjikā cult with repect to that of Tripurā is, I believe, well exemplified by the appearance of Kāmeśvarī in this passage with no reference either here or elsewhere to Tripurā, her later, developed form. The consistent silence throughout the later Kubjikā Tantras becomes strikingly eloquent when we notice the appearance of rituals centred on Tripurā, in the form of Tripurābhairavī, in the *Yogakhaṇḍa* of the *Manthānabhairavatantra*. Tripurā appears also in the CMSS, a relatively late Kubjikā Tantra, as the goddess of the Southern Tradition (*dakṣiṇāmnāya*) where her identity with Kāmeśvarī is evident (see Dyczkowski 1987a: 71).

these processes at work in the Tantras. The relationship the texts have with their living social, political, anthropological and cultural contexts - what they contribute to them and what they draw from them - will be examined elsewhere. Suffice it to say that we observe similar, if not the same principles operating in both dimensions, namely, the ideal one of the texts and the empirical one of their human contexts. We notice, for example, in both cases an attempt to furnish the cult of each deity with everything that is necessary to render it complete. Theoretically this should make it independent of all the others. But this is never the case either in the texts themselves or in their application. Indeed, in order to achieve this 'completeness' each cult assimilates elements from others. Even its most 'original' specific and specifying core is itself as much a product of a long historical process as is the uniqueness of its moment of creation. But this is not felt to be an oppressive contingency; rather this continuity with the past is considered to be a mark of authenticity and authority.

Concretely, in the case of the goddess Kubjikā, we observe that in some respects she has peculiar characteristics and traits which are virtually unique to her, while in others, she embodies many of the common characteristics of all the great goddesses of Hinduism. It is above all this fact, more even than the extent of her scriptural sources, which qualifies Kubjikā to be considered a great goddess - a Mahādevī - despite her extreme obscurity to the rest of Hinduism or, indeed, Hindu Tantrism in India. Thus, like all the great goddesses of Hinduism, of which the popular Purāṇic goddess Durgā is the prime archetype,[77] Kubjikā incorporates into herself many other goddesses.[78] Kubjikā is an exclusively Kaula Tantric goddess and the Tantras, especially the early ones, are only secondarily concerned with myths. Thus although the Kubjikā Tantras do contain myths recounting the origin of the goddess Kubjikā, there is no specific myth in her case which accounts for the process whereby she includes other goddesses into herself as there is for the Purāṇic goddess Durgā. Even so, we can observe the results of this synthesis in her rituals, mantras, maṇḍala and visualized forms. Accordingly, Kubjikā is both a unique goddess and is exemplary in many respects of the other great Kaula Tantric goddesses, especially Tripurā and Kālī.

Moreover, just as Kubjikā's external form is unique to herself, despite its composite nature, the same is true of her inner nature, that is, her metaphysical identity. Kubjikā, like all the other great goddesses of the Kaula and Bhairava Tantras, is essentially the energy of universal, absolute

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[77] Coburn writes concerning the *Devīmāhātmya*,well known as the source of the myth of origin of the goddess Durgā: "Of the various features of the *Devīmāhātmya*, one stands preeminent. The ultimate reality in the universe is here understood to be feminine: Devī, the goddess. Moreover, the *Devīmāhātmya* appears to be the first Sanskrit text to provide a comprehensive - indeed, well-nigh relentless - articulation of such a vision. From the time of the *Ṛgveda* onwards, of course, various goddesses had figured in the Sanskrit tradition. But never before had ultimate reality itself been understood as Goddess." (Coburn 1998: 32)
Durgā became the Sanskritic representation of many popular, local and regional goddesses throughout India and has served for centuries as the public form of the secret lineage Kaula goddesses of the Newars and of Kaula goddesses throughout India. Durgā, or, more precisely, Mahiṣāsuramardinī, the Slayer of the Buffalo Demon, is indubitably a prime archetype in this sense also.

[78] For example, in one place the goddess declares:
ahaṁ śūnyasvarūpeṇa parā divyatanurhyaham ||
ahaṁ sā mālinīdevī ahaṁ sā siddhayoginī |
ahaṁ sā kālikā kācit kulayāgeśvarī hyaham ||
ahaṁ sā carcikādevī kubjikāhaṁ ca ṣaḍvidhā |

As my nature is the Void, I am the Supreme goddess (Parā) and my body is divine. I am that goddess Mālinī, I am Siddhayoginī. I am that certain (inscrutable - kācit - goddess) Kālikā. I am indeed the mistress of the Kula sacrifice (kulayāgeśvarī). I am that goddess Carcikā, I am Kubjikā who is six-fold. (KKh 3/76cd-78ab)

consciousness (*cicchakti*) by means of which it does and is all things. Accordingly, Kubjikā is said to be both creative and destructive.[79] Even so, she is predominantly concerned with emanation (*sṛṣṭipradhāna*). Her cult can thus be contrasted with that of Kālī, which is predominantly concerned with withdrawal (*saṁhārapradhāna*). Even so, the spheres of manifestation are the domains of both deities. The rituals of both goddesses represent both processes. But Kubjikā, in several of her forms, is visualized, like Tripurā, as a young 'erotic' goddess (see Dyczkowski: 1996), symbolizing her fertile creativity. Kālī, on the contrary, is fierce, thus symbolizing the reverse. Even so, both types are essentially concerned with creation, and this is symbolized by their occasional portrayal in sexual union with their male counterparts.

Kubjikā, as we shall see in the passage quoted below, feels shy at the prospect of her coupling even though this takes place as the necessary corollary of her marriage to the god. Kālī, on the other hand, sits on top of her partner, who is reduced to such passivity by the fury of her passion that he can be variously portrayed as Śiva in some iconic forms or as a corpse (*śava*) in others. Referring to the earthly counterparts of these divine couples, namely, the Siddha and his Tantric consort, the Yoginī, the Tantras distinguish between these two types of coupling by calling them 'pleasing union' (*priyamelāpa*) and 'violent union' (*haṭhamelāpa*), respectively. The former generates the lineage of accomplished adepts (*siddha*) and the world of sacred places in which they reside. Like a witch who sucks out the vitality of the unwary male,[80] the latter withdraws the ignorance which normally impels the corpse-like Śiva locked in 'reverse intercourse' below to be active and 'on top' 'churning' his energies into a dynamic active state. The special intensity and fertility of Kubjikā, whose name means 'Humped-Back Lady', is further expressed by the transgressive image of the solitary[81] goddess bent double in order to lick her own vulva. Thus she makes herself blissful freely and independently and is so fertile that she can generate the impregnating sperm with which she herself is to generate the universe.[82]

But although both goddesses are represented in the context of their own special symbolism as independent and, hence, complete in themselves, both processes, which they respectively govern, must go together. Indeed, they are two aspects of a single process. In terms of the psychology of their symbolism only implicitly expressed in the texts, Kālī is the radiantly Dark Goddess of light who is the shadow-like counterpart of the shining light blue[83] Kubjikā. And so

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79 *maṇḍalānte sthitā nityaṁ sṛṣṭisaṁhārakārikā* | (ibid. 2/3ab)

80 On the subject of witches - called in various parts of India by such names as Ḍākinī, Ḍāyan, Ḍajan, Den. Dhakunī, Ceṭakī and Śākinī - see Herrmann-Pfandt (1996) who explains that "a husband of a human Ḍākinī has to cope with the danger of being sucked out or being brought to death through certain sickness" (ibid. p. 49).

81 Kubjikā is not usually portrayed in this way as a solitary goddess (*ekavīrā*), although there are prescriptions in the Tantras for her worship in this form. In a passage quoted below we find another reason for her bent condition in relation to her union with her consort, in which she is portrayed in her much more common coupled condition (*yāmalabhāva*). As usual, marriage and conjunction with the god tames the goddesses even as it deprives her of her independence. Thus, in that situation, she is not in a uroboric state of self-regeneration but is said to be generated from the god.

82 This aspect is evident in one of her common names, i.e. Śukrādevī, which means literally the 'Goddess Sperm'. Similarly, in a verse which is a part of the so-called *Saṁvartāsūtra* (ṢaṭSS 1/1 and KKh 1/1), which Newar initiates frequently recite in the course of their rituals to invoke Kubjikā (*āvāhana*), she is said to be the goddess whose 'mensis is sperm' (*bindupuṣpā*). This appellation not only symbolizes in a striking manner her androgenous nature (for which see Dyczkowski 1996) but also her powerful and independent fertility.

83 Kubjikā is said to be light blue 'like a cannabis flower' (*atasīpuṣpasaṁkāśā*) as is her maṇḍala, the Saṁvartāmaṇḍala.

they are distinguished, even as they are integrated, both by the discerning consciousness of the renunciate yogi and by the power of the symbolism of the householder's ritual action.

Thus, Kubjikā maintains her dominantly creative role, even when she is represented in her destructive mode and identified with Kālī.[84] In this aspect she functions like Kālī who gathers together the energies of manifestation and consumes them into her own essential nature, their radiant source. The Kālī Tantras constantly represent their goddesses in this destructive mode, just as the Kubjikā Tantras stress that Kubjikā is the embodiment of the god's primal intention to create the universe which, created in a series of graded emanations impelled by this intention, adorns her body.

Let us see what the texts themselves say. The first set of passages concern the goddess Kālī. They are drawn from the *Mahānayaprakāśa*, an important, unpublished text[85] of the Kashmiri *Kālīkrama* by Arṇasiṁha, who belonged to the later part of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century.

Extremely voracious, the network of (Kālī's) rays transcends both process (krama) and its absence. Abodeless and waveless, it is beyond the plane of both contact (with phenomena) and its absence. Thus there is nothing higher. This, the undistorted light of the one glorious energy of perfectly tranquil (consciousness), abides intent upon consuming its own (cosmic) nature.[86]

Again:

This same (goddess Kālī) is the Devourer of Withdrawal (saṁhārabhakṣiṇī). (This aspect of the goddess is) generated to relish the juice of the aesthetic delight (of objectivity inwardly digested). Endowed with the innermost consciousness of one's own nature, She is therefore well established and free (of all outer) support.[87]

Again:

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84 The root Tantra of the Kubjikā cult, the *Kubjikāmata*, hardly refers to the goddess Kālī. Even so the connection between the two goddesses is clearly established from the beginning of the Tantra. The god Himavān has just praised the god Bhairava who has come to visit him in the hermitage in the Himalayas. Bhairava is pleased by Himavān's devotion and offers him five boons. In response to these favours, Himavān offers Bhairava his daughter whom he introduces as the young virgin (*kumārikā*) Kālikā. We come to know that she was Umā in a previous life and that she is ultimately Kubjikā. In the later *Manthānabhairavatantra* she is called Bhadrakālikā. If the Newar Kaula initiates of Bhaktapur in the Kathmandu Valley were to study this Tantra they would certainly see in this textual identification a sign that Bhadrakālī, whom the citizens venerate as the founder of their town, is secretly Kubjikā. For an account of the role Bhadrakālī played in helping Ānanda Malla to found Bhaktapur see Levi 1992: 487ff..

85 This short tract of about three hundred verses is one of a number of such short tracts collected in a manuscript preserved in the National Archives in Kathmandu. The manuscript is wrongly labelled *Kālīkulapañcaśatikā* (see bibliography). Prof. Sanderson gave me a copy of the entire manuscript in 1981. I am grateful to him for supplying me with this material. Almost twenty years have elapsed since he gave it to me. To the best of my knowledge he has not published this text nor is he about to do so. I have therefore taken the liberty of making use of this important material myself.

86 *kramākramobhayottīrṇaraśmipuñjātighasmaraḥ* ||
svarūpaṁ hartumudyukto nistaraṅgo'niketanaḥ |
sparśāsparśapadātītarūpatvād vigatottaraḥ ||
praśāntātipraśāntaikamahimāvikṛtaprabhaḥ | (MNP 222cd-4ab)

87 *saṁhārabhakṣaṇī saiva rasasaṁcarvaṇotthitā* |
svarūpaprāntacitvattaḥ samārūḍhā nirāśrayā || (ibid. 29)

The wise say that that is the eternal process called withdrawal (saṁhāra). It is the arising of the outpouring of the rays of that great, unconditioned consciousness which, said to be free of the darkness of both being and non-being, is intent on consuming (all things).[88]

The following passage is drawn from a Kubjikā Tantra, namely, the *Kularatnoddyota* to which I have already had occasion to refer. The Tantra describes the origin of the goddess Kubjikā as an embodiment of the creative desire (*icchā*) of the god Bhairava. Note how, even though she is the main deity, she is said to be the god's attendant as would befit a pious Hindu wife. But even so, the universe is generated from them by means of a union that is necessarily incestuous:[89]

The Will, inherent in the essential nature of the transcendent, imperceptible, supreme and supremely blissful Lord, shone forth (babhau). God, aroused by his own will, fashioned a supreme body (vapu) (for himself). That (body) possessed every limb and was endowed with the previously (stated) attributes (of deity). Shining like billions of moons, it (was) an immense and marvellous mass of energy. The great lord, the venerable Kubjeśa, accompanied by the encompassing attendants (āvaraṇa) of the Śrīkrama (the tradition of the goddess Kubjikā), sat on the seat of the Wheel of Knowledge, adorned with the garland of Principles of Existence (tattva). The Lord of the gods, whose nature is beyond conception, comtemplated his own imperishable and sacred (bhāvita) nature, (the Self) of the venerable Wheel of Bliss.

Free of objectivity and residing in his own foundation (ādhāra), (he contemplated himself) in order to fashion the wheel called (the Wheel of) Bliss. Thus, O fair lady, as he contemplated himself, billions of aeons passed for (the god who) abides in the aloof reality (kaivalyārtha) (of transcendence). Then, the benefactor of the universe, for the benefit of (his) attendants (praticāraka) conceived the thought which is supreme Nirvāṇa, namely: 'Who is our attendant?'

Abiding thus for a moment, he applied (his) mind (manas) to his own foundation (svādhiṣṭhāna).[90] *(Thus) he aroused (his) supreme power whose form was coiled. Fire came forth by the*

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[88] *tadbhakṣaṇaḥ paraḥ prokto bhāvābhāvatamojjhitaḥ* ||
nirupādhimahābodharaśmyullāsamayodayaḥ |
etadevocyate sadbhiḥ saṁhārākhyo'vyayakramaḥ || (ibid. 204cd - 5)

[89] Compare this relationship with the one Kālī - the goddess of Time - has with her consort, Bhairava Mahākāla (the Great Time). Bhairava represents the vital breath (*prāṇa*). Its movement impells the motion of the mind and, with it, the flux of time. Kālī is the divine consciousness who, intent on consuming the energies of manifestation that arise out of her own nature, absorbs the vital breath and with it time into her eternal nature (MP p. 7). Thus, far from being the god's pious bashful attendant, she devours him! When we couple this perception of the goddess with Rāmakṛṣṇa's vision of the divine mother Kālī devouring the children to whom she has just given birth, the reversal of perspective is virtually complete.

[90] One of the major contributions that the Kubjikā cult has made to Śākta Tantrism as a whole is the well-known system of Six Wheels (*ṣaṭcakra*) visualized in the body as stations of the ascent of Kuṇḍalinī. Kubjikā is Kuṇḍalinī bent over in the form of a sleeping snake coiled in the first of these Wheels called *mulādhāra* - the Root Foundation. In this case, the energy within the body of Kujeśa is not in this Wheel, which is located in the base of the genitals, but in the second Wheel along, namely, *Svādhiṣṭhāna* - the Wheel of the Self-Supported. In this context, the collocation of this energy here is appropriate. The Wheel of the Self-Supported is the place where the erect penis makes contact with the cervix at the base of the womb during sexual intercourse. Thus this Wheel is the centre of the first point of contact in the union of Śiva and Śakti from which the emission (*visarga*) that generates the universe originates.

But although this makes sense, even so, given the prestige of the Six Wheel system in the Kubjikā Tantras, which is at the very core of the cult, one wonders at the anomalous role of this Wheel here. Is it a hangover from an earlier formulation of the Six Wheels when there were only five ?

left-hand path in the Sky, which is both supreme (transcendent) and inferior (immanent). (Thus) the Supreme Lord, who is the supreme (reality), emanated (sṛṣṭavān) the supreme goddess. O beloved, that goddess was Mahāmāyā,[91] endowed with his (own divine) attributes. Endowed with the attributes of the Supreme Lord, she was delighted with supreme bliss.

My Wheel called Bliss (said the Lord) is fashioned by means of both of them. (Thus) created, the supremely divine (goddess) was endowed with the twenty-five qualities (of the principles of existence), and, because she resides in the twenty-five principles of existence,[92] the Supreme Goddess was beautiful.

Energized by the (mantras called) the Five Jewels, enveloped by the seven bodily constituents (dhātu), her nature the wine (sudhā) (that inebriates her consort) and divine, she is coloured with the colour of the principles of existence (tattva). That goddess is (the god's) own will, Bhairavī, (who is in the company) of the God of the gods.[93]

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[91] The Tantra appears to imply that Kubjikā, as Mahāmāyā, should be identified with Durgā, the foremost public representation of the Great Goddess. Newar initiates into Kubjikā's cult stress how Kubjikā is preeminent amongst all the great goddesses of Newar Śāktism because she is Mahāmāyā in a more direct, original sense than the other goddesses, even though they are also all identified with Durgā (as Mahiṣāsuramardinī - the Slayer of the Buffalo Demon), who acts as their public exoteric form.

[92] We notice here that the usual thirty-six principles found in the Śaiva Tantras, and generally recognized also in the Kubjikā Tantras, have in this passage been reduced to the more basic Sāṁkhya set of twenty-five plus one, if we include the goddess herself. The Kubjikā Tantras nowhere identify the goddess with Nature (*prakṛti*) which is an identification found in the Purāṇas and, probably inspired by them, in the later Śākta Tantras from not earlier than the thirteenth century. When this identification is made, Śiva figures as the Person (*puruṣa*), who is not just the individual soul of the Sāṁkhya who goes by the same name, but the divine male counterpart of the goddess. The number of principles in such cases is then usually about twenty-five to twenty-eight, varying in detail according to the particular text and its cult. Is the set up in the Kubjikā cult of the *Kularatnoddyota* a first step towards the later conceptions or an archaic remnant of an earlier pre-Tantric theistic Sāṁkhya?

[93] The original readings in the two manuscripts I have collated are noted in square brackets. These are: MS K which is CSS MS no. C 348 - Bodlein Oxford and MS Kh which is NAK MS no. 1/1653 = NGMPP reel no. B 119/3.

atītasyāprameyasya [k: atītasya-] parasya parameṣṭhinaḥ |
paramānandayuktasya icchā svābhāvakī babhau ||
svecchayā kṣubhito [kh: kuṁbhito] devaḥ [k kh: deva] sa
cakāra [k: sa cakārā; kh: saṁkānā] paraṁ vapuḥ |
tacca pūrvaguṇairyuktaṁ [kh: pūrvasturṇairyyuktaṁ]
samagrāvayavānvitaṁ [k: samamrā-; kh: samamrāvayavānvitaṁḥ] ||
candrakoṭyarbudābhāsaṁ [kh: candrakopya-] tejorāśirmahadbhutaṁ [k: tejorāsi-; kh: tejośaṁsi-] |
jñānacakrāsanāsīnaṁ [kh: -sanāsīna] tattvamālāvibhūṣitaṁ ||
śrīkramāvaraṇopetaṁ [k: -caraṇopetaṁ; kh: -caraṇopeta] śrīkujeśaṁ mahāprabhuṁ |
śrīmadānandacakrasya bhāvitātmānamavyayaṁ [kh: savitātmanamavyayaṁ] ||
acintyātmā sa [k: acintayatsa; kh: acintayatma] deveśaḥ [k: deveśā; kh: deveśau] cakramānandasaṁjñakam |
kartuṁ [k: kartaṁ; kh: karta] devo.aprameyātmā [k kh: devya prameyātmā] svakīyādhārasaṁsthitaḥ ||
evamacintayat svayaṁ [k kh: evaṁ cintaya tastasye] kalpakoṭyarbudāni [kh: asya kalpakoṭya-] ca |
atītāni varārohe kaivalyārthasthitasya [kh: kaivalyārthai-] ca ||
athākarojjagaddhātā praticārakahetave [kh: -hetava] |
cintāṁ [k kh: cintā] paramanirvāṇaṁ [k kh: -nirvāṇaḥ] ko.asmākaṁ praticārakaḥ ||
iti sthitvā muhūrtaṁ [k: -rthaṁ; kh: mudruttaṁ] vai [k: se; kh: me] svādhiṣṭhāne [kh: -sthāne] mano dadhau |
kṣobhayet [k kh: -yat] paramāṁ [kh: paramā] śaktiṁ kuṇḍalākāravigrahām [k kh: -kālavigrahāṁ] ||

The text goes on to say that the god fashioned a skull bowl filled with the energy of the goddess in the form of wine (*surā*) with which he offered libations to himself and his attendants. The goddess is surprised by how the god can worship himself in this way through his own blissful power represented by the wine. Accordingly, she wants to know more about this internal rite of adoration through which, as the Tantra goes on to explain, the universe is created. Thus Bhairava, here called Śrīnātha - the Lord of the goddess Śrī, that is, Kubjikā - continues:

The goddess was established with devotion in the worship of the Beginningless Liturgy (anādikrama). Both of them were seated there and, in the union (melaka) of supreme bliss, the venerable Lord of Kula instituted (their) marriage (pāṇigrahaṇa).

Now the goddess was troubled (āśaṅkitā) and her body was bent with shyness (lajja). (Thus her) form as the 'crooked one' (kubjikā) came into being with (its) subtle, crooked limp (kiñcitkhañjagatiryaga)[94] *but even then, the Lord, blooming with joy, took the hand of the goddess and sat her on his lap.*

That is said to be the union of Śiva and Śakti. There, O goddess, they are also churned together as befits (saṁparipadyataḥ) (the act of union). There, O dear one, the male seed and mensis (rajas), the vital essence (dhātu of the god and the goddess) are mixed together.

The great and immortal Drop (mahābindu) originated there, O fair-faced one. Energized and shining, (it shone with the) light of tens of millions of suns.[95]

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niṣkrāmya vāmamārgeṇa bahirvyomni [kh: vahi-] parāpare [kh: -para] I
sṛṣṭavān [k: -vāt] paramāṁ devīṁ [kh: devī] sa paraḥ [k kh: parāṁ] parameśvaraḥ II
sā ca devī mahāmāyā priye taddharmadharmiṇī I
parameśaguṇairyuktā paramānandananditā II
tābhyāṁ taṁ tu mamārabdaṁ cakramānandasaṁjñakam I
nirmitā paramā divyā pañcaviṁśaguṇairyutā II
pañcaviṁśatitattvasthā [kh: -tatvaiśca] śobhitā [k kh: śobhitāṁ] parameśvarī [k kh: -rīṁ] I
pañcaratnakṛtāṭopā saptadhātuparicchadā [k kh: -dāṁ] II
sudhāsvarūpiṇī [k kh: sudhāturūpiṇī] divyā [k kh: divyāṁ] tattvarāgānurañjitā [k kh: -tāṁ] I
svakīyecchā ca [k kh: svakīyaśira] sā [k kh: so] devī [k kh: devi] devadevena [kh: bhedavadevana] bhairavī [k kh: bhairavi] II (KRU 1/53-65)

94 The goddess, identified, as we have already noted, with Kuṇḍalinī, is called the Lady with a Limp (Khañjinī) when she moves up through the Wheels of the god's body, halting for a moment as she pierces through each one.

95 *anādikramapūjāyāṁ bhaktyā devī [k kh: devi] niveśitā* II
tābhyāṁ tatropaviṣṭābhyāṁ paramānandamelake [kh: -melakaṁ] I
pāṇigrahaṇasaṁyogaṁ [kh: pānigrahana-] kṛtavān śrīkuleśvaraḥ II
athaivāśaṅkitā [kh: āvāṁ-] devī lajjayākuñcitā tanuḥ [kh: natuḥ] I
saṁjātaṁ kubjikārūpaṁ kiñcitkhañjagatiryagam [k: khañjāgatiyutaṁ; kh: khaṁjāgatiryyagaṁ] II
tathāpi tena devena harṣautphullayutena tu I
sā devī gṛhya hastaṁ [k kh: haste] tu svotsaṅge sanniveśitā [k kh: ma-] II
śivaśaktisamāyogaḥ [kh: -yogaṁ] sa eva parikīrtitaḥ I
tatrāpi mathanaṁ devi tayoḥ saṁparipadyataḥ II
tatra bījarajodhātoḥ [kh: dhāto] saṁmiśritvaṁ bhavet [k: saṁmiśritvabhavat; kh: sadyiśretvabhava] priye I
tatrotpanno [kh: tatrojñā] mahābinduramṛto yo [kh: yā] varānane II
dīptivān bhāsvaraścaiva [kh: dīptivāṁtāsvara-] sūryakoṭisamaprabhaḥ [k kh: -prabhuḥ] I (KRU 1/73cd-9ab)

The Tantra goes on to describe how the Drop bursts apart and the universe is generated from it step by step in a series of emanations that range down to the physical world and its inhabitants.

Kālī thus creates oneness in, and through, the destruction of multiplicity. Conversely, Kubjikā destroys, as it were, the primordial unity of the original solitary god, through the activity which brings about creation. But even though such distinctions can be discerned in the texts, and they themselves also make them, the two cults share basic, common goals. These include a vast range of benefits collectively referred to as accomplishments - *siddhi* - consisting of an amazing number of magical and yogic powers. Alongside these mundane aims, we find soteriological ones concerned with liberation *(mukti)*. This is portrayed variously as a positive, permanently blissful condition and/or as the ultimate condition resulting from the extinction of all suffering and contingency called Nirvāṇa. According to the Kubjikā Tantras, the source and essence of this extinction is the goddess Kubjikā herself. She is the Void *(vyoman, kha, ākāśa)* of the energy Beyond Mind *(unmanī)*.[96] This energy moves up perpetually into the highest sphere of absolute being which this school calls 'Śiva's maṇḍala' *(śāmbhavamaṇḍala)*, reminding us of the close association between the Śaiva and the Śākta Tantras. She then flows down from it into the spheres of her emanations, while she continues to reside within it. As the goddess behaves in this way, she is called Śāmbhavīśakti and Rudraśakti.[97] Both of these names for the supreme energy of consciousness are also common in the Tantras respected in the Kashmiri Śaiva tradition.[98]

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96 Like other major deities of various Tantric traditions, including Śiva and even Viṣṇu, Kālī is identified with the Void of consciousness. But her special domain is, as her very name suggests, time *(kāla)*. Abhinavagupta explains in his *Tantrāloka* :

Again, time (can be experienced) both as a succession (krama) (of moments) as well (as eternal time) free of succession. Both aspects abide entirely within consciousness. Thus scripture affirms that Kālī (the Goddess of Time) is the Lord's supreme power. It is that same power which, by its spontaneous development (praroha), manifests outside consciousness the succession and its absence, encompassed within its own nature, and so abides as the (life-giving) activity of the vital breath (prāṇavṛtti).

Consciousness alone, very pure and of the nature of light, severing objectivity from itself, manifests as the sky void of all things. That is said to be the voidness of consciousness and is the supreme state yogins attain by reflecting on objectivized manifestation with an attitude of negation (neti neti).

This same void Self (khātman) is called the vital breath, the throb (spanda) and wave (ūrmi) of consciousness. By virtue of its inherent inner outpouring (samucchalatva), it falls upon the objectivity (which it) separated from (itself) with the intention of taking possession of it. (TĀ 6/6-11)

The identification of the goddess with the energy of the Transmental *(unmanī)* is not unique to the Kubjikā Tantras. The Āgamas (i.e. Tantras) of the Śaivasiddhānta regularly prescribe the worship of Śiva's consort as the power of the Transmental. As in the Kubjikā Tantras, Śiva's consort in such Tantric texts is also understood to be the intermediary between the spheres of emanation, which are within the purview of the mind, and the transcendent above them; beyond mind. But whereas this conception figures occasionally in these types of Tantric text, it assumes a central role in the theology of the goddess Kubjikā.

97 *rudraśaktiḥ sadā pūjyā pīṭhānāṁ kīrtanādapi* |
siddhiṁ sphuṭā pradātārī śrīkujākhyāṁ nāmāmyaham ||

I salute the venerable (goddess) called Kujā who, clearly apparent, bestows accomplishment, she who is to be constantly worshipped as Rudra's energy and by praising the sacred seats (in which she resides). (KKh 5/81)

98 For example, see MV 1/44cd-5:
ajñānena sahaikatvaṁ kasyacid vinivartate ||
rudraśaktisamāviṣṭaḥ sa yiyāsuḥ śivecchayā |

In her creative aspect Kubjikā is especially identified with the energy of bliss which resides in the centre of the maṇḍala and the body. It is said to be the absolute itself, which is called the 'Neuter'. Beyond the male Śiva and the female Śakti,[99] it is their source within which they fuse into one. This energy of bliss in its primary, unmanifest state pervades the Void of consciousness.[100] At the same time, in its active manifest form, it is the triple energy (*triśakti*)[101] of will, knowledge and action. Together these energies constitute Kubjikā's nature as the generative Vulva (*yoni*).[102] The seed of the Vulva is the goddess's divine Command (*ājñā*) symbolically situated in the centre of the triangle of the Vulva, the goddess's maṇḍala. Through this energy the world is created, and through it one attains the authority (*adhikāra*) to perform Tantric and Kaula rituals, initiate others and

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bhuktimuktiprasiddhyarthaṁ nīyate sadguruṁ prati ||

(It may happen) that the unity a person has with (the condition of) ignorance ceases. (Such a one) is penetrated by Rudra's energy. By Śiva's will, he desires to go to a true teacher and is led (to one) so that he can attain liberation and (worldly) enjoyment.

Abhinavagupta considers this passage, and the correct understanding of the function of Rudraśakti, important enough to quote and comment on it twice in his *Tantrāloka* (see TĀ 4/33-5 and 13/199-203).

99 The *Kumārikākhaṇḍa* of the *Manthānabhairavatantra* declares that: *It is neither female nor is its form male, that bliss is the Neuter (absolute). (na strī na puruṣākāraṁ ānandaṁ taṁ napuṁsakam* | KKh 3/46ab). The goddess, who is the power of bliss (*ānandaśakti*), is accordingly called Napuṁsakā - the Female Eunuch. To the best of my knowledge this name is exclusive to the goddess Kubjikā. Apart from this usage in the literature of the Kubjikā cult, this is certainly a very rare, if not unique, form of the neuter noun *napuṁsakam*.

100 *khasthaṁ nivartitākāraṁ avyaktaṁ bhairavātmakam* |
evamānandaśaktistu divyaliṅgā kramoditā ||

Located in the Sky (of consciousness), its form has been completed (to perfection - nivartita) and, unmanifest, it is Bhairava. In the same way, the power of bliss is the divine (female) Liṅgā (divyaliṅgā) that has emerged from the sequence (krama - of the lineage and the liturgy). (KKh 3/47)

101 These three energies are a standard set found not only in the Tantras but also in Purāṇic representations of Śiva's energies. The triad is well known to the worshippers of the goddess Durgā as the three goddesses who are the consorts of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva. They represent the three qualities (*guṇa*) of Nature (*prakṛti*) with which the goddess Durgā is identified. Newar Kaula initiates also link their conception of these three energies with the qualities, representing this association by the respective colours of their three goddesses, who are the black Guhyakālī, the red Kāmeśvarī, and Siddhalakṣmī who is white. Two pictures of this triad can be viewed in the museum in Bhaktapur. Note the conspicuous absence of Kubjikā in this triad. This is because she is identified with Mahāmāyā, which is, according to the Purāṇic account, Nature, their original source. Thus she is present there, in a sense, as all three. Or, to put it another way, she is their basic absolute and hence unmanifest, secret identity.

102 *yā sā śaktirbhagākhyātā śambhorutsaṅgagāminī* |
kaulinī brahmacaryeṇa śrīmāndevī napuṁsakā ||

The energy called the Vulva (bhaga) who sits on Śambhu's lap is, by virtue of (her) continence, Kaulinī, the venerable goddess Neuter (napuṁsakā). (KKh 3/63)

The Sanskrit of these texts is not infrequently deviant. Here is a particularly interesting example of how deviant Sanskrit can be employed with a meaningful purpose. The expression '*śrīmāndevī napuṁsakā*' combines an irregular masculine form of address (*śrīmān*) and, as we have already noted, the peculiar transformation of a neuter noun into a feminine adjectival name (*napuṁsakā*), both with reference to the goddess, to represent her multivalent nature. Other cases of deviant Sanskrit have not, and will not, be noted here.

ultimately lead them to the same realization.[103] The *Tantra of the Churning Bhairava* (*Manthānabhairavtantra*) tells us:

In the centre (of the maṇḍala) is the Place of Repose; it is the expansion (of emanation - prasara) and the experience (of ultimate reality), the understanding of which is one's own (spiritual) authority.[104]

This same energy is also in the centre of the body, that is, between the two vital breaths of inhalation and exhalation. There, Kubjikā abides in the fullness of her ambivalence. Blissful in the transcendent beyond worldly pleasure and its consequent pain, she is horrifying in her alluring beauty as the universal activity of time in her manifest universe:

It is said that the power of bliss is merged between the inhaled (prāṇa) and exhaled breath (apāna). Located in the middle of the Stick of the Cavity of Space (i.e. suṣumnā), she pervades the energy of the consciousness of the individual soul.

Slender, her limbs variegated by time (kāla) and moment (velā), she awakens (the initiate) to (ultimate) reality. Merged in the plane (of Śiva), the One Devoid of (mere phenomenal) Pleasure (nirānanda), she is supreme, imperishable and horrific.[105]

It is supreme bliss and, as such, is the eternal bliss which is the final end (of all existence). (It is Śiva), the One Devoid of (mere phenomenal) Pleasure (nirānanda), (who) is tranquil. Free of the eight causes (that constitute the subtle body), it is free of the qualities (guṇa) and principles (tattva) and devoid of both that which is to be taken up and abandoned.[106]

As emanation itself, Kubjikā is the maṇḍala. This maṇḍala is primarily the triangle of the Vulva (*yoni*). This is why the goddess is called Vakrā - Crooked. This basic triangular form has four components located at the three corners and the centre. These are the four primary seats (*pīṭha*) of the goddess. The goddess is the entire economy of energies. But she is not just the sum of all energies, she is also every one of them individually. They are deployed in sacred space, and indeed the energies are the sacred places themselves. Thus the identity of each energy as the object of worship is determined by its location (*sthāna*):

The energy called the Vulva is endowed with the movement of the three paths (i.e. the three major channels of the vital breath), and consists of three letters (i.e. AIṀ, HRĪṀ, ŚRĪṀ) and three aspects (will, knowledge and action). (It contains) the venerable Oḍḍiyāṇa which, endowed with the supreme energy and well energized, is located in the middle. The venerable (sacred seat) called

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103 This interesting and original concept, reminiscent in some ways of the Tantric Buddhist conception of *Bodhicitta* - 'Mind of Enlightenment', is dealt with extensively solely in the Kubjikā Tantras. All beings whatever their status, gods, men or demons, have spiritual authority because they have received the Command (*ājñā*) of the goddess Kubjikā. This Command permits them to exert this authority within their jurisdiction. This doctrine may well have served to justify the configuration of Newar Kaula Tantrism around this goddess in the radical manner in which it is at present.

104 *madhye viśrāmabhūmiṁ prasaramanubhavaṁ pratyayaṁ svādhikāram* || (KKh 1/3c)

105 *prāṇāpānāntare līnā ānandaśaktirucyate*
kharaṇḍadaṇḍamadhyasthā aṇucitkalayāpinī |
kālavelāvicitrāṅgī tanvī tattvaprabodhakī ||
nirānandapade līnā bhīṣaṇī paramāvyayā | (KKh 2/5 - 6ab)

106 *parānandasvarūpeṇa nityānandaparāyaṇam* ||
nirānandamayaṁ śāntaṁ kāraṇāṣṭakavarjitam |
guṇatattvavinirmuktaṁ heyopādeyavarjitam || (KKh 13/5cd-6)

Jālandhara is located within the abode manifested in the right corner. The venerable sacred seat Pūrṇa is in the left (corner) formed through the fear of the fettered, while Kāmarūpa is in its front (lower corner).[107]

It is interesting to note that this grouping of sacred seats occurs in the Buddhist *Hevajratantra* and some other major Buddhist Tantras. The sacred geography of these Tantras has much in common with those of their Hindu equivalents of the time, including the Kubjikā Tantras.[108] The triangle in the centre of Śrīcakra is also occupied by these seats, and the siddhas who reside in them are also the same. But neither of them are extensively worshipped as happens in the Kubjikā cult. Indeed, there are good reasons to believe, which we shall investigate in another publication, that the innermost triangle of Śrīcakra is the same one described in the Kubjikā Tantras. It appears that the Śrīvidyā tradition, which postdates the earliest Kubjikā Tantras, was so inspired by the power of this triangular Yantra that it chose to incorporate it as the centrepiece of its own complex Yantra, the Śrīcakra.

The Kālīkrama also thinks of the supreme power as simultaneously emanating and being the sacred seat of its energies:

O mother! This, the great sacred seat (pīṭha) born from You, is the energized vitality (of consciousness) which pours forth when Śiva becomes one with You by virtue of your perpetually expanding body of energy.

Within the five elements, Earth and the others, resides the body of Light, the imperishable energy of manifestation. And this, the (divine) intellect, the supreme vitality (of consciousness) is You, O (goddess) Śivā, who generates the Wheel of the Sacred Seats (pīṭhacakra).

You, who alone possess all the powers of the Wheel of the the Sacred Seats, abide always and eveywhere. Perceived, O Mother, by the wise who are at one with the force (of pure consciousness - udyama), You are the unobscured dawning (of enlightenment).[109]

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107 *yā sā śaktirbhagākhyā tripathagatiyutā tryakṣarā triprakārā*
tasyāḥ śrī-oḍḍiyāṇaṁ parakalasahitaṁ madhyasaṁsthaṁ sudīptam |
tacchrījālandharākhyaṁ prakaṭitanilaye dakṣiṇe caiva koṇe
vāme śrīpūrṇapīṭhaṁ paśujanabhayakṛt kāmarūpaṁ tadagre || (CMSS 1/4)

The above verse is in *śragdharā* metre. Apart from the standard *śloka*, the metre in which most of the Tantras are written, this complex metre appears to have been especially favoured by Tantric authors prior to the eleventh century. The Buddhist *Kālacakratantra* is almost entirely written in this metre. The above passage is of special interest because it is quoted in the *Vimalaprabhā*, a commentary on the *Kālacakratantra* by Śrīpuṇḍarīka, who lived in the middle of the eleventh century. In the usual derisive manner of Buddhist commentators towards others who are not Buddhists, Puṇḍarīka refers to those who accept the authority of the source of the above reference as demons to be devoured (*bhakṣadaitya*). They have not known the supreme secret and their body is like that of the demon Māra who tormented the Buddha (*Vimalaprabhā*, vol. 3 pp. 146-8). This body is the triangular Vulva (*bhaga*) of the goddess, which this verse describes and the Kubjikā Tantras teach the adept should project into his own body. Here is yet another testimony to the existence of the Kubjikā Tantras in the eleventh century outside Nepal, possibly in Bengal, if this is the place where Śrīpuṇḍarīka wrote his commentary, as some scholars believe.

108 *pīṭhaṁ jālandharaṁ khyātaṁ oḍḍiyānaṁ tathaiva ca* |
pīṭhaṁ paurṇagiriścaiva kāmarūpaṁ tathaiva ca || (*Hevajratantra* 1/7/12)

For details of *pīṭhas* listed in selected Buddhist Tantras see *Bauddha tantroṁ meṁ pīṭhopapīṭhādi kā vivecana* in *Dhī*, Sarnath, Varanasi, 1986 vol.1, pp.137-148.

109 *amba śaktivapuṣā tvayonmeṣadrūpayā samarasaḥ śivo yadā* |

The Kubjikā cult is called the Sequence of the Mother (*avvākrama*) and also, as is the cult of Śrīvidyā, the Śrīkrama. The corresponding Kālī cult is the Kālīkrama. The term *krama* means literally 'sequence' and, by extension, a lineage or tradition. These are common, non-technical uses of the word. In a technical sense, *krama* denotes a Kaula liturgy, consisting as it does of a sequence of actions and recitations of mantras. Unlike the Śrīkrama, the Kālīkrama includes within the sequence of the rite of adoration (*pūjākrama*) the sequences of emanation, persistence, withdrawal and the inexplicable (*anākhya*). The *Mādhavakula* section of the *Jayadrathayāmala*, to which Abhinavagupta refers in his treatment of Kaula ritual, declares that:

(According to this practice), in order to attain both worldly enjoyment (bhoga) and liberation, one must worship the tetrad of emanation, persistence, withdrawal and the inexplicable together with the sacred seats and the burning grounds.[110]

The four moments of emanation, persistence, withdrawal and the inexplicable are worshipped as separate configurations of goddesses. The cult of Śrīvidyā, like the Śaivasiddhānta, and indeed most sophisticated Tantric ritual, replicates through ritual action the cyclic creation and destruction of the universe.[111] It is particularly well represented in the ritual program of the Kālīkrama. Indeed, in the Kālīkrama they are considered to be fundamental aspects of the goddess herself:

(O Umā), unfolding awareness of creation, persistence and destruction! The dawning (of enlightened consciousness), unobstructed, eternal and imperishable, unfolds, illumined by (the devotion) of your devotees....[112]

Moreover, the three states are contained in a fourth one beyond them called 'Nameless' (Anākhyā). This is the transcendental, pure dynamic consciousness (*saṁvit*) that generates, sustains and withdraws the three states.[113] A major characteristic of the Kālīkrama, this notion is absent in

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yat tadollasati vīryamūrjitaṁ pīṭha eṣa hi mahāṁstvadutthitaḥ ||
yā śive sphuraṇaśaktirakṣayā kṣmādipañcakaniviṣṭabhātanuḥ |
sā mahad bhavati vīryamagrimaṁ yanmayī tvamasi pīṭhacakrasūḥ||
pīṭhacakranikaraikadharmiṇī tvaṁ sthitā ca satataṁ samantataḥ |
sadbhirudyamanirantarātmabhirlakṣyase'mba niravagrahodayā || (CGC 76 - 8)

110 *sṛṣṭisaṁsthitisaṁhārānāmakramacatuṣṭayam* |
pīṭhaśmaśānasahitaṁ pūjayed bhogamokṣayoḥ || (TĀ 29/57)

111 Davis (1991: 42) writes: "The universe oscillates. It comes and goes, emerges and disappears . . . Śaiva daily worship also echoes the rhythm of the oscillating universe. The paired concepts of 'emission' (*sṛṣṭi*) and 'reabsorption' (*saṁhāra*), with which Śaivite cosmology describes the movements of the oscillating universe, are embedded as an organizing logic in the patterning of worship."

112 *nirjanasthitilayaprathātmike'grāsanityaniravagrahodayaḥ* |
jṛmbhitastvadanupākṣadīpito . . . (CGC 81abc)

113 The root Tantra of the Kashmiri Kālīkrama is the *Jayadrathayāmala* of twenty-four thousand verses to which we have already had occasion to refer as the most authoritative scripture of the Newar cult of Siddhilakṣmī. The *Jayadrathayāmala* is a very important work for many reasons. One of these is the relatively frequent reference to the phenomenology of the dynamic energy of consciousness which in this text is termed *saṁvit*. This term is rare in other non-Buddhist Tantras despite the fact that it is the basic term used for consciousness by Kashmiri Śaivites. Even more striking, when compared with other Hindu Tantras of this period (i.e. prior to the development of Kashmiri Śaivism), is its surpisingly sophisticated idealism which identifies subject and object through the act of perception. Although, the *Mahākālasaṁhitā* is a Kālī

the basic form of the Kubjikā cult. Even though Kubjikā is frequently called the Nameless, she is not described as the fourth inexplicable consciousness which encompasses the triad of creation, persistence and destruction, as happens in the Kālīkrama. Let us examine some sample texts in order to observe the difference this identification makes. In the following passages Kubjikā is called the Nameless (Anāmā or Anākhyā) and she is identified with the energy of consciousness called Transmental (Unmanā):

There, at the end of the mind, there is nothing else except the (energy) which is beyond the mind (manonmanī). (And so), she is called the Transmental (unmanā), the supreme (energy), who transports the nectar (of immortality).[114]

Again:

Above that is the Transmental (unmanā) state; that state (corresponds to the) Śāmbhava (principle). (One attains it) once one has practiced (immersion in) the one Void where everything comes to an end. And once the Transmental at the end of the Void has been reached, who is it that is not freed from bondage?[115]

Emanation (sṛṣṭi) (generated) from the sequence (krama) abides alone in the Vulva, facing downwards. (This energy is) the Transmental (manonmanī), the essential Being (of all things - sadbhāvā) and the great wave (of the energy of consciousness) - whose form is Light.[116]

Kubjikā is the energy 'beyond mind' which leads to the pure transcendent Being of her consort. She is the Inexplicable (Anākhyā), Without Name (Anāmā) not, primarily, because she is the *semper eternum* of God's Being which encompasses past, present and future in its inexplicable simultaneity, although she is also this, but, above all, because she is, literally, beyond the mind. She is the final stage at the end of a vertical ascent through the expanse of immanence, at the extremity closest to transcendence.

Again, the location of the multiple energies of the goddess is not only represented by the goddess's sacred seats. It also refers to the placement of the letters of the alphabet within a diagram called a *prastāra*. The letters of a mantra are extracted from this diagram. This is done by indicating the position of each letter in relation to other letters next to it. This process is the microcosmic parallel of creating the universe part by part from the phonemic energies that constitute the universal energy of the goddess. Thus, Kubjikā like other Kaula goddesses, such as Mālinī, is both every single phonemic energy and so is the one 'Letter' (*varṇā*), and is also transcendent and so is called 'Devoid of Letter' (*avarṇā*):

Tantra which postdates the *Jayadrathayāmala* and makes extensive use of this fourfold division of creation, persistence, destruction and a fourth state beyond them, it is devoid of the earlier idealism due to its exclusive focus on external ritual. The paradigm is so basic, whether internalized or not, that it is not surprising to discover that the Newar Kālī rites are similarly dominated by this fourfold division.

114 *nānyaṁ tatra bhavet kiñcinmanasānte manonmanī* I
unmanā sā samākhyātā parā hyamṛtavāhinī II (KKh 15/13)

115 *tasyordhve unmanāvasthā tadāvasthā hi śāmbhavam* I
śūnyamekaṁ samābhyasya yatra sarvaṁ nivartate II
śūnyānte tūnmane prāpte ko na mucyati bandhanāt I (KKh 9/18-9ab)

116 *kramāt sṛṣṭiḥ sthitā yonau ekā eva hyadhomukhī* I
sadbhāvā sā mahānūrmirjyotirūpā manonmanī II (KKh 24/44)

Vidyā, the auspicious power (śakti), residing in letter and what is devoid of letter, is of two types. (One is the energy of) the syllables (of all mantras - akṣarā) (and the other is) the energy of consciousness. (By knowing this the adept attains) success (siddhi). On the path of the Vidyā mental vigour (medha) (is acquired) by action perceived (as correct) by the scripture.[117]

Elsewhere the goddess says:

She, O Lord, is the deity and I have spoken of her as the deity. She has emerged from the cave hermitage (guhāśrama) and, devoid of sound (asvara), she transports sound (svaravāhinī).[118]

The maṇḍala of Saṁvartā, which is the fundamental maṇḍala of the goddess Kubjikā, develops from the triangle mentioned above. It consist of six parts which, drawing from the terminology of temple architecture, are called *prakāra*. The *prakāra*s are the encompassing series of walls in a temple compound, or around a tree, which demarcate the sacred space around the centre where the deity resides.[119] Encompassing through her maṇḍala all things in this way, the goddess pervades all things because she is all things. From this point of view, the drawing of the maṇḍala symbolizes the deployment of the goddess in the time and space of eternal pervasion. This takes place by a process the Kubjikā Tantras and the Kālīkrama call 'churning'. This is the process of emanation marked by the emergence of the individual energies or aspects (*kalā*) of Kula, the universal energy with which Kubjikā is identified.[120] The Kubjikā *Tantra of the Churning Bhairava* (*Manthānabhairavatantra*) explains:

Thus, (reality), supreme (transcendent) and inferior (immanent), is divided by the division (brought about by) the churning (manthāna) (of power and its possessor). In this way, Passion is

117 *vidyā nāmākṣarā śaktirdvidhairbhedairvyavasthitā* |
cicchaktiriti siddhiḥ syāt sā varṇāvarṇagā śubhā ||
vidyāmārge ca medhastu śāstradṛṣtena karmaṇā | (KKh 14/21-2ab)

118 *eṣā sā devatā devatayā khyātā mayā prabho* |
guhāśramād viniṣkrāntā asvarā svaravāhinī || (KKh 17/24)

119 An interesting feature of this temple is that it is not the temple of the great Sanskritic tradition, but the archaic tree shrine of popular local folk tradition. Thus, in places, the texts apparently identify Kubjikā with a local goddess who lived in a tree or a stone underneath it. Accordingly, her Circle (*maṇḍala*) is the Circle of the Tree, the original circle being the shade of the tree of which the tree, and hence the stone, were the centre. Consistent with this symbolic representation of Kubjikā's abode is her name, Śilādevī - the Goddess Stone, as the goddess in the centre of this maṇḍala. Interiorized, the Tree Maṇḍala acquires the encompassing enclosures that are normally built when the deity of the tree and the stone develop in importance. Thus the development of the Tree Maṇḍala mirrors the development of the Hindu temple and the local, rural goddess of the Tree becomes the Great Goddess of the temple and the city who is kept hidden in her maṇḍala. In the final section of this essay, I deal with the goddess's association with trees and vegetation.

120 The *Kumārikā* section of the *Churning Bhairava Tantra* defines the nature of this activity as follows: "(The act of) churning is said to be emanation itself, which is the arising of the aspects of the (energy of) Kula" (*manthānaṁ sṛṣṭirevoktaṁ kaulikaṁ kalasaṁbhavam* || KKh 17/35cd). Maheśvarānanda, writing in South India during the thirteenth or twelfth century, quotes the *Kramakeli* in his *Mahārthamañjari* (p. 172). This important work by Abhinavagupta on the Kashmiri Kālīkrama had, along with many other works of this tradition, reached South India from the North by that time. The same passage is also quoted by Kṣemarāja in his commentary, the *Spandanirṇaya* (p. 6), on the *Spandakārikā*. The passage explains that the god of the Kālīkrama is called Manthānabhairava, lit. the Churning Bhairava, because "he engenders the creation etc. of all things (by arousing) and churning his own power." In this case, the teachings of the Kālīkrama and Kubjikā's Śrīkrama coincide.

present within emanation, the Passion which is the destruction of desire (kāma). And that is Haṁsa (the Gander), the Great Soul which is the nectar generated from the (primordial) fire. These two are called Śiva and Śakti. The triple universe is woven warp and woof (with them). This is the secret called the 'Great Churning' (mahāmanthāna).[121]

The womb of energies, the Vulva, is, by a symbolically significant reversal and conjunction of polarities, known as the Vulva Phallus (*yoniliṅga*) which is said to be 'churned from above'. The inner, unmanifest power is aroused by its own spontaneous inspiration. The upper part is the male principle - the Phallus (*Liṅga*) - the lower part the female - the Vulva (*Yoni*). The drop of the vital seed which is generated thereby is the empowering Command (*ājñā*), which is both the source of the universe and the means to attain the supreme state:

The divine Liṅga, churned from above, is divided into six parts (prakāra). These are the Sacred Seats (pīṭha) and the rest. The (goddess) called Vakrikā (resides) there. She is the bliss of the Command (ājñā), pure with blissful sexual intercourse (sukharati). She creates all things and destroys (them). She is consciousness and, abiding in the supreme state, she bestows both (worldly) enjoyment and liberation.[122]

Again:

In this way Rudra's energy, the mother of persistence and destruction, has pervaded all things with the three varieties (of the powers of will, knowledge and action). The primordial and free God of the gods, who is both Kula (Śakti) and Akula (Śiva), resides in the centre. His Command, in the form of a Drop (of sperm - bindu), is consciousness which bestows accomplishment (siddhi) and removes the fear of the fettered. (The Command is the goddess) Perpetually Wet (Nityaklinnā) who, aroused by her own passion (svaraktā), is free and bestows the perpetual bliss which is delighted by phenomenal existence.

In the middle is the divine Liṅga which gives supreme bliss. It is the Drop and the Sky. The perpetually blissful nature, which is the churning of the two, is divided into six parts. I salute the (goddess) called Kubjikā whose beautiful body is aroused and engenders passion there (or 'makes love there' - kurvantī tatra kāmaṁ).[123]

The Newars, following a pattern common to Kaula Tantrism in general from the thirteenth or fourteenth century, classify the lineage goddesses as belonging to six traditions (*ṣaḍāmnāya*).

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121 *tasmānmanthānabhedena bheditaṁ ca parāparam* ||
evaṁ sṛṣṭigatānaṅgaṁ anaṅgaṁ kāmanāśanam |
sa ca haṁsaṁ mahātmānaṁ jvalanādamṛtodbhavam ||
dvāvetau śivaśaktyākhyau otaprotaṁ jagattrayam |
etad rahasyamākhyātaṁ mahāmanthānasaṁjñayā || (KKh 24/27cd - 29)

122 *pīṭhādyaiḥ ṣaṭprakāraistaduparimathitaṁ divyaliṅgaṁ vibhinnam* |
tatrājñānandarūpā sukharativimalā viśvakartrī ca hantrī |
cidrūpā vakrikākhyā paramapadagatā bhuktidā muktidā ca | (KKh 2/10)

123 *evaṁ vyāptaṁ samastaṁ sthitilayajananī rudraśaktistribhedaiḥ*
tanmadhye devadevamakulakulamayaṁ tanmayādyasvatantram |
yasyājñā bindubhūtā paśubhayaharaṇī siddhidā bodharūpā
nityaklinnā svaraktā bhavamuditasadānandadātrī svatantrā ||
tanmadhye divyaliṅgaṁ paramasukhakaraṁ bindurūpaṁ kharūpaṁ
nityānandasvarūpaṁ tadubhayamathanaṁ ṣaṭprakārairvibhinnam |
kurvantīṁ tatra kāmaṁ kṣubhitavaratanuṁ śrīkubjikākhyaṁ namāmi || (CMSS 1/5-6)

They are symbolically arranged and worshipped in the four cardinal directions along with the nadir and the zenith. According to a representative Newar liturgy, they are:

1) Upper: Tripurā 2) Lower: Hāṭakeśvarī or the Buddhist Vajrayoginī 3) East: Pūrṇeśi 4) North: forms of Kāli including Guhyakālī, Siddhilakṣmī and Dakṣiṇakālī 5) West: Kubjikā 6) South: Niśeśī[124]

These six goddesses and their consorts, or their equivalents, are worshipped in the corners of a six-sided figure formed from two triangles. One triangle faces down and represents Śakti - the lineage goddess. The other faces up and represents Śiva - the goddess's consort. This figure, seen very commonly in and around Newar temples and houses, symbolizes the union of opposites represented by these divine, all-embracing polarities. Union takes place between the triangles, at the corners and in the centre, which is marked by a dot, representing the fecund fusion of the vital seed of the couple. Kashmiri Śaiva texts explain that this figure also represents the sexual union of the divinized human couple engaged in a special type of Kaula ritual.[125] Newar initiates are also aware of this symbolism and openly accept it. When questioned about this, one man explained that this is the reason why Newars in general, and Kaula initiates in particular, prefer the householder life. Celibate renunciates cannot perform all the rituals. What such statements mean and imply

[124] I have drawn this information from *Paścimajyeṣṭhāmnāyakarmārcanapaddhatiḥ* (fols. 87b-91b) where the worship of the deities of six traditions is described as a part of the regular rite of the western tradition (*paścimāmnāya*, which is that of the goddess Kubjikā). It is important to note that, whatever the tradition, the deities of all six must be worshipped. Thus the initiation Newars receive not only initiates them into the worship of their own lineage deity but also into the worship of all of the others. The lineage goddess is not worshipped exclusively; but she is given pride of place. Moreover, whoever one's own lineage deity may be, the maṇḍala in which the deities of the six lineages are worshipped is enclosed by Kubjikā's mantra (see below). Thus Kubjikā, in the form of her mantra, encompasses them all and thereby energizes them.

The contents of the six traditions are the ones prescribed by the *Parātantra*. This may well be because the *Parātantra* is a Newar product. In 1947 a series of articles written by the Nepalese major-general Dhana Saṁśer Jaṅgabahādur Rāṇā came out in the Hindī magazine *Caṇḍī*. In these articles the author expounds the pantheon and related matters of these six traditions on the basis of the *Parātantra* and other texts considered authoritative by Newar Śāktas. Note that the *Parātantra* (chapter six) prescribes the worship of Vajrayoginī as the deity of the Lower Tradition, stating that this is the tradition of the Buddhists. Newar Kaulas have replaced her with Hāṭakeśvarī who, along with her consort Hāṭakeśvara, governs the hell worlds. This change is in consonance with the expurgation by Newar Kaulas of Buddhist influences in their rites.

[125] Referring to the symbolism of the formation of the letter AI, Abhinavagupta says that the letter E is represented by the triangle of the goddess's Vulva, which is "beautiful with the fragrance of emission" (*visargāmodasundaram* - TĀ 3/95a). Then: *When the powers of the absolute (the letter A) and bliss (the letter Ā) become firmly established there (in the triangle, which is the letter E), it assumes the condition of the six-spoked (maṇḍalaṣaḍavasthiti, i.e. AI) brought about by the union of two triangles.* (TĀ 3/95b-6a). Jayaratha comments that "in the process of the practice of ritual sex (*caryākrama*) the condition corresponding to the Gesture of the Six Spokes (*ṣaḍaramudrā*) arises by the encapsulation of the two triangles, (one being that of the) male adept (siddha) and (the other that of the) yoginī." The sides of these triangles are formed from the three channels of the vital breath (*iḍā, piṅgalā* and *suṣumnā)* that come together in the genital region of each of the two partners engaged in this rite. The vital breath is impelled along these three channels by the energies of will, knowledge and action. When these extroverted energies are experienced in conjunction with the inner energies of the absolute and its bliss, as happens for a moment, at least, in sexual intercourse, the three energies and corresponding vital breaths of the partners work together to generate the emission (*visarga)* through which the fecund seed of the couple is projected with force through the centre.

exactly is never made explicit by any of the people I have interviewed. So the reader must be content, as I have to be, to wonder.

Just as this six-sided figure represents the six lineages, it is also commonly found in the maṇḍala of the lineage goddesses, technically called the *Kramamaṇḍala*. This is the case with the *Kramamaṇḍala* of the Western Tradition (*paścimāmnāya*), which the Kubjikā Tantras describe as "the city of the illumined intellect (*dhī*)"[126] because it is the embodiment of the teachings of the lineage (*krama*) of teachers who transmit the tradition (*krama*) and because its constituent elements, represented by mantras, are worshipped in a fixed sequence (*krama*) which constitutes the liturgy - *Krama*. There are twenty-eight such constituents and so the rite of adoration (*pūjākrama*) of this maṇḍala is called the Sequence of Twenty-Eight (*aṣṭaviṁśatikrama*). These twenty-eight constituents are represented by mantras arranged in six groups consisting of four, five, six, four, five and four parts. They are projected onto the corners of the six-sided figure. According to one interpretation, they are as follows:

1) The Group of Four: the intellect along with the energies of will, knowledge and action.
2) The Group of Five: the five types of sensation, namely sound, form, taste, smell, and touch.
3) The Group of Six: the five sense organs, namely the ear, eye, tongue, nose, skin and mind.
4) The Group of Four: the four states, namely waking, dreaming, deep sleep and the Fourth.
5) The Group of Five: the group of five gross elements - water, fire, earth, wind and space.
6) The Group of Four: the three qualities of Nature, namely *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, along with Śiva, their master.

According to contemporary Newar ritual procedure, the two superimposed triangles are surrounded by an eight-petalled lotus. Eight mother goddesses (*mātṛkā*) are worshipped on the petals. They guard the directions and the divine couple in the centre. Outside this eight-petalled lotus is a sixteen-petalled lotus. The deities worshipped here are the eight mother goddesses again, but this time along with their consorts, the eight Bhairavas, who are worshipped next to them. The coupling that takes place in the centre between Kubjikā and her Bhairava is thus reflected in this encompassing circle which completes the periphery of the core of the maṇḍala energized by these couplings. This is then enclosed in the final outer circle consisting of a thirty-two-petalled lotus on the petals of which are worshipped the thirty-two goddesses who are the energies of the thirty-two syllables of Kubjikā's mantra.

The foundation of each sophisticated Tantric system, such as this one, is the maṇḍala it describes.[127] It is through it that the rite of adoration of the principal deity or couple, which is in the centre of the maṇḍala, takes place. Accordingly, we find that the six groups which are the vital core of the goddess's maṇḍala recur repeatedly in the Kubjikā Tantras, usually with some further reflection or addition drawing, as it were, more each time from the configuration of energies. The components of the maṇḍala are worshipped systematically, part by part, each with its own group of mantras. The deployment of energies in space is thus parallel to their deployment in time. Both of

126 *yadetat kaulikaṁ jñānaṁ kramamaṇḍaladhīpuram* I (KKh 5/1ab)

127 The core of a Tantric system of the early period consists of the extensive description of the maṇḍala of its main deity and the rites associated with it. Certainly, such Tantric systems include numerous other rituals and practices; nonetheless the system proper essentially consists of this. The many other matters that are not directly associated with the worship of the main maṇḍala or one of its forms are accretions, additions and appendages that may well be extensive and even significant, but they are not essential to the system. By this I mean that the basic system would remain intact even if they were to be absent.

these are held together by their sequence (*krama*) in time and space.[128] There are three such sequences. They are the Sequence of the Child, the Youth (also called the Middle One) and the Eldest. They are also called the Sequences of the Individual Soul (*āṇava*), Energy (*śākta*) and Śiva (*śāmbhava*).[129] Kubjikā is the goddess of these sequences (*kramadevī*), and she manifests as and through them in the form of their mantras. This identity is acted out symbolically by the worship of a fourth sequence, which is conceived as containing the other three, namely the Sequence of the Female Skyfarer (*khecarīkrama*). The energies of these sequences of mantras are further reinforced and applied in the ritual by equating the six parts of the maṇḍala with the goddess's six limbs and her six faces. These are worshipped in all three sequences.

In this way the goddess is worshipped as all that exists both externally, in the outside world, and internally within the body. The latter aspect is represented in various ways. For example, the six parts of the maṇḍala represent six configurations of the phonemic energies that constitute speech and mantras present in the body of the goddess and of each person. These are the standard

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128 Abhinavagupta explains in his brilliantly profound manner: *The extending process of diversification and development (kalanā) along the path (of the cosmic order) takes place in two ways, namely in a sequential and in a non-successive manner. Succession (krama) and its absence essentially amount to (the two ways in which forms are manifest) in the field of phenomenal existence. Thus this can take place either through the differentiated development of single units (ekakalanā, as happens, for example, in making the transition from cause to effect) or (simultaneously of a number of units, as happens when viewing) a picture.* (TĀ 6/6)

We may note in passing that Abhinavagupta is indebted for these concepts not to any Tantric tradition but to Bhartṛhari, the philosopher of grammar, for this important exegesis of the Kaula term *krama* (meaning literally 'sequence' or 'succession').

129 Nobody who has studied the Trika Tantrism elaborated by Abhinavagupta can fail to notice that these three sequences bear the names of the three major categories into which Abhinavagupta, inspired by his Trika teacher Śambhunātha, has classified practice both ritual and yogic (which one could say is roughly equivalent, as Abhinavagupta presents it, to what may be called mysticism). It appears that these terms were originally used in the Tantras to denote phases in the liturgies of some of the rituals they taught, as is the case with the Kubjikā Tantras. Once again one is struck by the extensive use Abhinavagupta has made of the language of ritual to talk about mysticism, that is, experience of the sacred, and to formulate philosophical and theological concepts. Indeed, he is so adept at speaking the language of ritual for such purposes that one is apt to forget that a work such as the *Tantrāloka* is, despite its extremely rich philosophy and mystical soteriology, structured in the form of a liturgical work (*paddhati*). Indeed, Abhinavagupta himself tells us right at the beginning of his *Tantrāloka* that it is a work not of philosophy or a treatise on Yoga but a work concerning ritual:

santi paddhatayaścitrāḥ srotobhedeṣu bhūyasā I
anuttaraṣaḍardhārthakrame tvekāpi nekṣyate II
ityahaṁ bahuśaḥ sadbhiḥ śiṣyasabrahmacāribhiḥ I
arthito racaye spaṣṭāṁ pūrṇārthāṁ prakriyāmimām II

Various are the liturgical manuals (paddhati) in use in the many diverse traditions. But for the rituals (krama) of the Anuttaratrika there is not even one to be seen. I therefore, repeatedly requested by (my) sincere disciples and fellows, compose this liturgy (prakriyā), which is clear and complete. (TĀ 1/14-5)

The term *prakriyā* may, in some contexts, mean a 'literary work' but here I take it to mean 'liturgy'. This usage coincides with that found in the expressions *tantraprakriyā* and *kulaprakriyā*. We are told by Jayaratha, the commentator on the *Tantrāloka*, that the rituals and practices in the *Tantrāloka* belong to these two types, namely Tantric ritual and Kaula ritual. The former is centred on the god, Bhairava or Śiva, and the latter on the goddess or goddesses.

Six Wheels (*saṭcakra*) of what is nowadays commonly known as Kuṇḍalinī Yoga. This is a very important part of the ritual and cosmology of this tradition since the goddess Kubjikā is essentially, not just secondarily, identified with Kuṇḍalinī.[130] Thus the texts take great pains to describe these Six Wheels.

This Yoga can be practised for realization coupled with worldly enjoyment. This is termed *anugraha* ('grace'). It can also be practised to accomplish magical acts designed to control and harm others. This is a form of 'worldly enjoyment' (*bhoga*) called *nigraha* ('restraint').[131] The texts warn that this should be practised only when the intended victims have seriously transgressed the rule (*samaya*) of the tradition. Each wheel generates and sustains one or more of the components of the body, the flesh, fat, bone, marrow and so on. Each of these components is governed by one of Kubjikā's attendants who are the mistresses (*nāyikā*) of each wheel. Called yoginīs, these are demonic goddesses or witches who can be invoked to perform magic rites. Thus, each one of the six wheels can correspond to one of the standard six magic rites (*ṣaṭkarma*). A practice is recorded for each one according to the magic rite one wishes to perform. A separate vidyā[132] and maṇḍala (also called yantra) is prescribed for each one. Even so, they are all linked to one of the three varieties of Kubjikā's thirty-two-syllabled mantra known as Vajrakubjī. In this way, a link is maintained with the supreme goddess who is identified with Kuṇḍalinī as the energy of the vital breath and speech.

Another important aspect of the deployment of the goddess's power in time and space is the transmission of her empowering Command (*ājñā*) through initiation. The temporal sequence (*krama*) in this case is the lineage of the transmission. This is the goddess's family (*kula, anvaya, santati*) which belongs to her clan (*gotra*) and house (*gṛha*).[133] Thus the residence, place of

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[130] All the major Kaula goddesses are identified with Kuṇḍalinī. The goddess Kubjikā differs from other Kaula goddesses in that she is not Kuṇḍalinī merely by ascription. Much of her mythology, iconography and ritual is moulded primarily around her personage, metaphysical identity and activity as Kuṇḍalinī. It is not an extra feature of her nature which has been added on to the others from the outside, but is part of the very essence of her very specific iconic form and nature. Moreover, as Sanderson (1988: 687) points out: "The system of six power-centres (*cakras*) is also characteristic of the yogic rituals of the *Kubjikāmatatantra* . Later it became so universal, being disseminated as part of the system of *kuṇḍalinīyoga* beyond the boundaries of the Tantric cults, that it has been forgotten in India (and not noticed outside it) that it is quite absent in all the Tantric traditions except this one and the cult of the goddess Tripurasundarī." It appears, moreover, that the cult of Tripurā borrowed this from that of Kubjikā. Evidence for this is the addition in the Tripurā cult of what are clearly three extra subsidiary centres to make nine. This is because the maṇḍala of Tripurā is made of nine enclosures (*āvaraṇa*). Kubjikā's maṇḍala, as we have seen, is made of six parts (*prakāra*) to which the six centres correspond without need of accommodation.

[131] *nigrahānugrahe śaktirbhavate tava niścayam* |
martyaloke vrajitvā tu kuru krīḍāṁ yathecchayā ||

It is sure that yours is the power to assist (anugraha) and to obstruct (nigraha). Once gone to the mortal world, play as you will. (KKh 5/54)

[132] Just as the male mantra embodies a god in sound form, similarly the female Vidyā embodies a goddess.

[133] This a common analogy found in various forms and more or less emphasized in all Tantric traditions. Indeed it reaches back into Vedic times. The analogy became concrete fact in the not uncommon case of the Brahmin father who acted as the tutor and spiritual preceptor of his son. In this context, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* envisages the transfer of spiritual knowledge literally as a transfer of vital force from father to son at the moment of the father's death:

When a father thinks that he is going to die, he says to his son, "You are Brahman, you are the sacrifice, you are the world." [...] *When a father who knows this leaves this world, he penetrates his son*

initiation and preaching of the teachers in the goddess's family should all be recollected along with each teacher. The goddess gives rise in this way to the sequence which is her external manifest form. The sequence (*krama*) of the rite and the sequence of the lineage would not be complete without it. Accordingly, the texts prescribe that the Maṇḍala of the Teachers (*gurumaṇḍala*) should be drawn along with the Maṇḍala of Saṁvartā (that is, the *kramamaṇḍala* of this school described above), but worshipped before it. Newar Kaulas thus worship the teachers of their lineage along with the legendary founders of the cult of their lineage goddess in a maṇḍala that is drawn specially for this purpose as part of the preliminaries of the more elaborate rites of adoration (*kramārcana*).[134]

The worship of the lineage of teachers and sacred places transposed onto the body through the ritual of deposition (*nyāsa*) is basic, common practice in all major Kaula schools. Thus in Abhinavagupta's presentation of Kaula ritual the worship of the maṇḍala with these components is an essential preliminary to ritual union with the Tantric consort. He writes:

Kula is the wheel (cakra) which consists of mantras, the (accomplished adepts and teachers of the tradition known as) Siddhas, the vital breath, (embodied) consciousness and the senses. The powerful (universal) consciousness which resides within it is here called Kuleśvarī. She must be worshipped in the centre ... either alone (ekavīrā) or together with her Lord.[135]

The seed syllable mantra AIṀ is the form of the goddess Kubjikā worshipped in the centre of her maṇḍala along with Bhairava, whose form is the seed syllable called Navātman. The seed syllable of the goddess Tripurā is also AIṀ[136] and it is called Vāgbhava ('Essence of Speech') in both systems. As this syllable, Kubjikā is identified in one of her forms with the goddess Parā. She is thus linked to both conceptions, without coinciding exactly with either. But note that although

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together with speech, the mind and the vital force. [...] *The father remains in this world through the son alone. The divine and immortal organ of speech, mind and vital force pervade him.* (1/5/17; English translation drawn from the *The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Mylapore: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1979).

Finding support from such traditions in the Brahminical world view, the Newars have understood the Tantric analogy between a spiritual lineage and familial one literally.

134 Vajrācāryas, the Newar Buddhist Tantric priests, do the same. Locke informs us that: "The Guru Maṇḍala rite is a ritual performed at the beginning of every *pūjā* performed by a Vajrācārya. The *maṇḍala* in question is the Mt. Meru *maṇḍala* which is offered to the gurus, i.e., the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha and Vajrasattva." For a detailed account of this rite see Locke 1980: 81-95 from where this reference is drawn.

135 *mantrasiddhaprāṇasaṁvitkaraṇātmani yā kule* ||
cakrātmake citiḥ prabhvī proktā seha kuleśvarī |
sā madhye . . . pūjyā . . . ||
ekavīrā ca sā pūjyā yadi vā sakuleśvarā || (TĀ 29/46cd-8)

I have published a diagram of the *Gurumaṇḍala* described in the *Tantrāloka* to which the interested reader is referred (see Dyczkowski 1987a: 81). Note that the maṇḍala has been published upside down.

136 Cf: *aiṁkārāsanamārūḍhāṁ vajrapadmoparisthitām* |
siddhiṁ māṁ dadate nityaṁ śrīkubjākhyāṁ namāmyaham ||

I salute the venerable (goddess) called Kubjā who, mounted on the seat of the letter AIM and seated on the Thunderbolt Lotus, constantly gives me accomplishment (siddhi). (KKh 5/73)

she is frequently identified with the goddess Parā she differs, in this context, from the Parā Vidyā of the Trika which is SAUḤ.[137]

AIṀ is one of the most important seed syllables in the mantric system of the Kubjikā cult. It precedes most of the mantras and Vidyās of this school. Indeed, it is an important seed syllable for all the Kaula traditions prevalent in Nepal. Thus the Newars regularly place it in the centre of the maṇḍalas they make to house their lineage goddesses. Moreover, it is the first of an important group of five seed syllables called the 'Five Brahmās (*pañcabrahma*)' or 'Five Instruments (*pañcakaraṇa*)'. In one version, these are AIṀ HRĪṀ ŚRĪṀ PHREṀ HSAUṀ.[138] They are well known, in a variant form, in the Śrīvidyā tradition as the Five Ghosts (*pañcapreta*) who support the throne on which Tripurā sits, namely, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Maheśvara and Sadāśiva. They are located in the innermost triangle of Śrīcakra. The first three, which are said to be the seeds of creation, persistence and destruction, respectively, prefix most of the mantras used in the worship of Śrīcakra.

The consort of Kubjikā is a form of Bhairava called Navātman. His seed syllable, also called Navātman, is HSKṢMLVRYŪṀ. This seed syllable, or variants of the same, were known to Kashmiri Śaivites from the *Svacchandatantra* and other sources.[139] It has two forms in the cults of both Kubjikā and Śrīvidyā cult: one is HSKṢMLVRYŪṀ, which is related to the male aspect. The other is SHKṢMLVRYĪṀ, which is related to the female aspect.[140] The first form is also used in the rites of the *Svacchandatantra*. The Kubjikā texts hardly do more than note the existence of both forms: even so both are commonly prescribed together in the liturgies compiled by the Newars as happens in the worship of Śrīvidyā.

The Goddess of Fire

Now we have dealt with some of the creative aspects of the goddess Kubjikā, we should refer to the other, destructive ones. As we have noted already, while Kālī destroys as she creates,

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137 In this contrext, Kubjikā as Parā is not to be directly identified with the goddess Parā who forms a part of the triad Parā, Parāparā and Aparā. The Vidyā of Parā (as a member of this triad) found in the KMT is different. See above, footnote 65.

138 This is according to KMT 5/34ff.. Important variant forms of the last two syllables commonly found in Newar liturgies and other Kubjikā Tantras are KHPHREṀ (for PHREṀ) and HSŪAUṀ (for HSAUṀ).

139 Kṣemarāja analyzes it in his commentary on SvT 4/102-3. There he describes how to write it in a diagram and how each letter corresponds to a principle (*tattva*). It is also used in Śaivasiddhānta ritual (see SŚP 2/11, *Pūrvakāraṇa* 2/10-11a and *Aghoraśivapaddhati* p. 255).

140 At the beginning of the worship of Śrīcakra the teacher is invoked through what is called the Guru mantra. According to one liturgical text, this is as follows:

> *aiṁ hrīṁ śrīṁ aiṁ klīṁ sauḥ haṁsaḥ śivaḥ so'haṁ hasakhaphreṁ hskṣmlvryūṁ hsauṁ shkṣmlvryīṁ shauḥ svarūpanirūpaṇahetave svagurave śrī-annapūrṇāmbāsahitaśrī-amṛtānandanāthaśrīguruśrī-pādukāṁ pūjayāmi tarpayāmi namaḥ* |

Taken from *Śrī Cakra, The Source of the Cosmos*, special issue, *The Journal of the Śrī Rājarājeswarī Pītham* (Rochester, NY 14623), p. 1. There are many lineages of initiates into the cult of Śrīvidyā. Unlike the goddess Kubjikā who has been confined in great secrecy to the Kathmandu Valley for centuries, the cult of Śrīvidyā has flourished throughout the Indian subcontinent for not less than eight hundred years. As happens with other Tantric cults, individual lineages may produce liturgies (*paddhati*, *pūjāvidhi*) of their own, in some cases in great numbers. The liturgical text quoted above belongs to an important lineage which has initiates not only in India but also the United States. The interested reader is referred to this publication for a list of names and addresses of some of these initiates.

Kubjikā creates as she destroys. This is expressed symbolically by equating her with the all comsuming fire that burns up the universe at the end of each aeon, namely the Fire of Time (kālāgni), here called Saṁvartā (lit. 'The Year' and so, the 'Fire of the Aeons') or Vāḍavāgni (lit. 'The Fire from the Mare's [Mouth]'). According to the Purāṇas, this fire burns at the bottom of the ocean. The water it causes to evaporate falls as life-giving rain. Similarly, the energy in the centre of the Circle of the Fire of the Aeons (*saṁvartāmaṇḍala*), the main maṇḍala of the Kubjikā Tantras, is said to consume the Ocean of Kula.[141] This ocean is the maṇḍala itself, which is made of the energies of the goddess who is Kula. As the fire which burns at the end of a cosmic age and consumes all the worlds, it remains hidden in the darkness of the Void produced thereby. It is from here, the energy hidden within the Void, that creation proceeds. As the goddess tells the god:

O Hara, within this void form, one with darkness, was the mind of the bliss of the play (of transcendental Being). It was tranquility (itself) close to Kula (the energy of the absolute) and I knew nothing at all, O Hara, by speech, hearing or sight. Nor was I aware (of anything). The joy, fifty-fold (of the fifty letters of the alphabet), which is the bliss of liberation (kaivalya) was within the Fire of the Aeons (saṁvartā). Its will is the Unmanifest whose form is subtly manifest. Then I was overcome with wonder and (asked myself): "What is this voidness?" And realizing that it was terrible and deep, I was frightened and (my) mind slumbered. Having entered into Bhairava's sacrifice, I remained there in (my) supreme form. And as an atom (of consciousness) the Lion (siṁhaka) (bore) a subtle form. O Lord, the Lion Fire (siṁhasaṁvartaka), full of darkness, became manifest (vyāvṛta).[142]

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141 *prajvalantī svakiraṇaiścarubhirraudramaṇḍale* |

She burns intensely with her beautiful rays in Rudra's sphere (maṇḍala). (KKh 13/121ab)

Again:

krama maṇḍalamadhyasthaṁ jvalantaṁ dīparūpakam |
tallingaṁ taṁ ca vṛkṣaṁ ca vidhinā kramanāyakam ||

The (reality) in the centre of the Krama Maṇḍala burns in the form of (the flame of a) lamp. That is the Linga, that the Tree and, according to the rule, the master of the Krama. (ibid. 8/77).

Although Abhinavagupta did not make use of Kubjikā Tantras as his sources, he knew this symbolism well from other Tantric traditions. He incorporates it into his own Trika system presenting it, as he usually does, with a sophisticated interpretation based on a phenomenology of universal divine consciousness acting in and through each act of perception:

This path is worthy of being described in this way because the yogi quickly (drāk) attains Bhairava's nature, contemplating the sequence of its configuration (prakriyākrama) (contained in the initial impulse towards perception) as is explained in the Spanda teaching. Experiencing all the (cosmic) path (in this way, the yogi) should dissolve it into the deities (who preside over it). They are (then merged), as before, progressively into the wheel of the body, vital breath and intellect. (Finally) all this (is merged) collectively into his own consciousness. This consciousness which is full of all things and is continuously worshipped (and practised) is (like) the fire of universal destruction (which dries up) the ocean of transmigration. (TĀ 8/5-8)

Concerning the Spanda teachings see my trilogy on this school of Kashmiri Śaivism, *The Doctrine of Vibration*, *The Stanzas on Vibration* and *The Aphorisms of Śiva*.

142 *śūnyākāre tamaikatve ramaṇānandacetasam* |
śamanaṁ kulasaṁkāśaṁ kiñcijjānāmyahaṁ hara ||

This Tantric goddess, who as we have noted above, was in all probability a local folk goddess, is thus implicitly identified with the fire of the Vedic sacrifice into which the worlds are offered and from which they arise again. In this process the goddess herself is as if transformed. Both these themes, namely the transformation of the goddess and her association with the Vedic sacrifice are explicit in one of the rare myths of this Kaula tradition. This myth is yet another of very many versions scattered throughout the sacred texts of India of the story of Dakṣa's sacrifice.[143] The common nucleus of the story is simple. A Brahmin named Dakṣa sponsored a great Vedic sacrifice to which he invited all the gods except Śiva of whom he disapproved even though, indeed because, he was the beloved husband of his favourite daughter, Umā. The god was sorely offended and, much angered, destroyed the sacrifice and his consort immolated herself in the sacrificial fire. Thus to Dakṣa accrued the demerit of failing to complete it. A Kubjikā Tantra goes on to add its own slant to the story:

When the goddess came to know of what had occurred, (she said): "My father Dakṣa's sacrifice has been destroyed by me because (its destruction was) due to me. I am the sinner (and so) will purify myself!" She stoked the Supreme Fire, brilliant with waves of raging flames.. She contemplated it burning fiercely from the middle of the Maṇḍala of Gesture (mudrāmaṇḍala). She then assumed the adamantine posture and recalled to mind the energy of Aghoreśvarī. She burnt herself with the Fire of Time and became (like) a smokeless, burning coal. (This) wise woman, dead and reduced to ashes, left the mortal world.[144]

The goddess was then born to Himavān, the god of the Himalaya range, as Bhadrakālikā.[145] Śiva, recognizing her voice as that of his wife Umā, again sought and obtained her hand in marriage. Thus he united with her once more and all the polarities of existence were reunited. The multiplicity of all things fused back into their complimentary opposite pole, the one transcendent

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na vācā śruticakṣubhyāṁ na ca buddhyāmyahaṁ hara |
kaivalyānandamāhlādaṁ saṁvartāntaṁ śatārdhakam ||
tasyecchā kiñciccinmātramavyaktaṁ vyaktirūpiṇam |
tadāhaṁ vismayamāpannā kimidaṁ śūnyarūpakam ||
iti matvā gahanaṁ ghoraṁ bhītāhaṁ suptacetasā |
praviṣṭā bhairave yajñe sthitāhaṁ pararūpataḥ ||
paramāṇusvarūpeṇa kiñcidrūpaṁ ca siṁhakam |
siṁhasaṁvartakaṁ nātha vyāvṛtaṁ tamasākulam || (KKh 24/7-11)

[143] The myth of the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice occurs for the first time in the *Ṛgveda* (1/51/5-7). It is retold in the *Aitareyabrāhmaṇa* (13/9-10) and in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* (1/7/3/1-4). It occurs in both the epics and in the Purāṇas, including *Mahābhārata, Śāntiparvan 284; Rāmāyaṇa, Bālakāṇḍa 65/9-12; Śivapurāṇa, Rudrasaṁhitā, Satīkhaṇḍa 12-42* and *Vāyavīyasaṁhitā 18-33; Vāyupurāṇa 30; Liṅgapurāṇa 100; Skandapurāṇa, Maheśakhaṇḍa, Kedārakāṇḍa 2; Brahmapurāṇa 39; Kūrmapurāṇa 1/15; Matsyapurāṇa 5; Bhāgavatapurāṇa 32; Devībhāgavatapurāṇa 6/38; Mahābhāgavatapurāṇa 4/1-10* and *Kālikāpurāṇa 16-18.*

[144] *jñātvā cedaṁ tadā devī idaṁ vṛttāntamāgatam ||*
matsaṁbandhācca dakṣasya ahaṁ sā pāpakāriṇī |
pituryajñaṁ mayā dhvastaṁ ātmānaṁ śodhayāmyaham ||
jvalajvālormisaṁkāśamuddīpya paramānalam |
jvalantaṁ cintayitvā tu mudrāmaṇḍalamadhyataḥ ||
vajrāsanaṁ tato badhvā smṛtāghoreśvarīkalā |
kālāgninā svayaṁ dagdhā nirdhūmāṅgāratāṁ gatā ||
mṛtā bhasmagatā sādhvī uttīrṇā martyalokataḥ | (KKh 3/162cd- 6ab)

[145] See above, fn. 84.

Being which is their original source. The myth teaches in this way, amongst other things, that the adept must similarly throw himself into the purifying fire in the centre of the maṇḍala. There he will fuse with the Supreme Goddess (Parā) who, in her fierce aspect, is the Transmental (*manonmanī*), the energy which is the light of consciousness[146] described in the following passage:

Horrific (ghorā), she burns without smoke, (like) the flame on the wick of a lamp. Shining like countless millions of Rudras, she is Rudra's energy, and is both supreme (transcendent) and inferior (immanent). (This) energy is the Drop (bindu) which is the deluge (of energy that flows) right up to the earth and contains millions of millions of Rudras. Its radiant power (tejas) is the Supreme Energy, Rudra's energy, the Great Goddess.[147]

The Lunar Goddess

Along with her associations with the cosmic fire, Kubjikā, like Kālī, Tripurā and, indeed, many other goddesses, has extensive lunar associations. The moon alternates progressively between light and darkness. It both bestows and withdraws its light. Similarly the lunar goddess shines darkly as it were. Kālī, who as her name tells us with its double meaning, is both Lady Time and the Black Lady, is in an apparently paradoxical manner described as radiant light (*bhāsā*). Kubjikā also possesses these two aspects. In her case however, although she is also sometimes said to be black (*śyāmā*) or light blue, her brightness, rather than darkness, is more frequently emphasized in the forms, myths and sacred geography associated with her. Thus, for example, she is said to reside on the Island of the Moon in the form of a lunar stone, in the centre of the island, symbolizing the lunar drop (*bindu*). Her lunar whiteness is associated with the fertilizing sperm. Her lunar power and ambigiously plural sexual nature combine, and so she is called Śukrā - Female Sperm. She lives on the triple peak of the Mountain of the Moon which is identified with Meru, the mountain at the centre of the world. Her abode is the City of the Moon and her house is the House of the Moon, where perfected yogis and yoginīs reside. By entering this tradition, the initiate becomes a sacred person in a sacred land, mountain or island in the company of perfect beings. It is a secret inner world - the land of the maṇḍala.

Set in sacred space and sacred time, the sacred house of the tradition is thought to be regenerated in and through each cosmic age. The present is a summation of the past; it is its completion. Time and space work together in the continuity of the lineage, the family and its descendants (*santāna*). To enter the secret, sacred places one must be a part of this process. One must be born from it, sustained by it, and ultimately merge into it.

The 'process' (*krama*) in this case is the sequence of the phases of the inner moon. As Eliade (1974: 155) notes:

The sun is always the same, always itself, never in any sense "becoming". The moon, on the other hand, is a body which waxes, wanes and disappears, a body whose existence is subject

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146 *tadantaragatā vidyā yā parā parameśvarī |*
sā śaktirbhīmarūpeṇa jyotirūpā manonmanī ||

Within that is the Vidyā who is Parā, the Supreme Goddess. She is energy in (her) terrible aspect, the Transmental (manonmanī) (whose) form is light. (KKh 13/117)

147 *dīpavartiśikhā ghorā jvālinī dhūmravarjitā |*
rudrakoṭisahasrābhā rudraśaktiḥ parāparā ||
rudrakoṭidharo binduḥ śaktirābhūmisaṁplavaḥ |
tasya tejaḥ parā śaktirrudraśaktirmaheśvarī || (KKh 13/118 -9)

to the universal law of becoming, of birth and death. The moon, like man, has a career involving tragedy, for its failing, like man's, ends in death. For three nights the starry sky is without a moon. But this "death" is followed by a rebirth: the new moon. The moon's going out, in "death", is never final. One Babylonian hymn to Sin sees the moon as "a fruit growing from itself". It is reborn of its own substance, in pursuance of its own destined career. This perpetual return to its beginnings, and this ever-recurring cycle make the moon the heavenly body above all others concerned with the rhythms of life .

In the body, the "rhythms of life" are most clearly apparent in the movement of the vital breath, and it is in this movement that the goddess's lunar nature is most clearly perceived. In this context, Kubjikā, the energy of consciousness (*citkalā*), has two aspects. One is the energy of plenitude - the Full Moon (*pūrṇā*). The other is the energy of emptiness - the New Moon (*amā*):

I praise (the goddess) called the Full (Moon) who resides at the end of the sixteen (digits of the moon) in the bright fortnight, whose form is (round like) that of a bud of the kadamba tree,[148] *and nature that of nectar.*

I praise the goddess New Moon (amā) who resides in the centre (of the sphere of the Full Moon), she who is the lioness of the nectar of union (utsaṅgāmṛtakesarī), the original form (bimba) of (the goddess) Kālikā, and beautiful by virtue of her moonlight form (candrikākāra).[149]

The New[150] and the Full Moon are the two extremities of the movement of vitality. The fullness empties out until, exhausted, it reverts to its original potential condition which is the source of all energies. The light turns to darkness and the darkness turns to light as Kubjikā reveals her dark aspect and Kālī reveals her radiance. This cosmic cycle is repeated in the movement of the breath. When it takes place mindfully, in the manner about to be described, breathing becomes the epitome of time. Its ceaseless recurrence, which is life itself, mirrors within the creation and destruction of the world, replicating thus internally the fire sacrifice (the performance of which is coordinated with the phases of the moon) through which the world is created and which marks its end.

148 See the next section for Kubjikā's association with trees and vegetation.

149 *kadambagolakākārāṁ ṣoḍaśānte vyavasthitām* ||
śuklapakṣe tvahaṁ vande pūrṇākhyāmṛtarūpiṇīm |
tanmadhye kālikābimbaṁ utsaṅgāmṛtakesarīm ||
devīṁ amāmahaṁ vande candrikākārarūpiṇīm | (KKh 3/121cd-3ab)

150 Abhinava writes about this energy:

Nectar (amṛta) in the form of the moon is divided into sixteen, then again into two. The other fifteen digits are drunk by all the gods. The energy of the New Moon (amā) hidden in the cave (of the Heart), is the remnant which fills and satisfies the universe. The fifteen digits of the moon empty themselves out in this way one after the other. But this is not the case with the empty sixteenth (digit), which nourishes as does water and nectar. (TĀ 6/95-7)

It is worth noting that Abhinavagupta in his extensive survey of the Tantras refers only to the energy of the new moon as the source of the other lunar energies. Perhaps the symbolic combination of the two, namely, the emptiness of the new moon and the plenitude of the full moon, is a connection that is made only in the Kubjikā Tantras. It is certainly not common, even though the symbolism of the energy of the New Moon (*amākalā*) is well known to many Tantric traditions and both new moon and full moon are usually considered to be particularly important times in Indian liturgical calendars.

Accordingly, the Kubjikā Tantras, mindful of the importance of this process, teach several versions of it, one of which should be visualized in the following manner. The first stage engages the energy of the New Moon. It is the dark phase of progressive merger. The adept should sit and direct his attention down to the genital centre where he should visualize the rotating Wheel of Birth (*janmacakra*). In the middle of that moving wheel, the Wheel of the Drop rotates in an anticlockwise direction, the reverse of the original pure condition. Within that is the supreme energy of consciousness, Kubjikā, the Transmental (*manonmanī*). By contracting the anus, inhaling and then retaining the breath, this energy is raised up with, and through, the flow of vitality that travels up the central channel of vitality in the body called Suṣumnā.[151] Like a whirling wheel of fire, it enters first the navel and then the heart. Its movement beyond this station of expansion marks its progressive depletion as it assumes increasingly subtle forms of sound (*nāda*). Finally at the climax of its ascent, it merges into the primary energy (*ādyaśakti*) of the sphere of Śiva's transcendental being (*śāmbhavamaṇḍala*). Thus, through this process, the residual traces of past action are burnt away.

Then follows the second phase, which involves the energy of the Full Moon. Just as the energy of the New Moon was elevated from below, this energy is 'elevated' from above. The *Tantra of the Churning Bhairava* describes this process as follows:

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[151] In the Upaniṣads this upward movement is described as one of the ways in which the vital breath can exit the body when a person dies. It is the best way, the only one which leads to immortality. The others lead to various forms of rebirth. The *Chāndogyopaniṣad* quotes an earlier authority as saying:

There are a hundred and one channels of the heart.
One of these passes up to the crown of the head.
Going up by it, one goes to immortality.
The others are for departing in various directions. (8/6/6. This same stanza recurs in *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 6/16. See also *Taitterīyopaniṣad* 1/6 and *Praśnopaniṣad* 3/7)

Suṣumnā is mentioned by name, perhaps for the first time, in the following interesting passage in the *Maitryupaniṣad*. This is one of the earliest references to the Yogic process of leading the breath upwards through this channel:

Now it has elsewhere been said: "There is a channel called the Sushumnā, leading upwards conveying the breath, piercing through the palate. Through it, by joining (yuj) the breath, the syllable OṀ, and the mind, one may go aloft. By causing the tip of the tongue to turn back against the palate and by binding together (saṁyojya) the senses, one may, as greatness, perceive greatness." Thence he goes to selflessness. Because of selflessness, one becomes a non-experiencer of pleasure and pain; he obtains the absolute unity (kevalatva). For this it has been said:
After having first caused to stand still
The breath that has been retained, then,
Having crossed beyond the limited, with the unlimited
One may at last have union in the head. (*Maitryupaniṣad* 6/21. Both these passages are Hume's translations)

According to later descriptions of this process, the breath rises, taking the heat of the body up along with it (as happens when a person dies), in such a way that the central channel feels warm. Thus, *sūṣmā* - lit. She Who is Pleasingly Warm - the alternative name for this channel, occasionally found in the early Kaula Tantras, gives us a clue to the meaning of the word *suṣumnā* as perceived by Kaula Tantrics.

(The adept) should elevate (the goddess) in the form of semen (retas) from the middle of the Drop, the Upper Place. The same (energy) that had previously waned away (now) rains down the nectar of the Full Moon (pūrṇāmṛta).

(The adept) should contemplate that crooked energy. Endless and tranquil (saumyarūpā), is (the goddess) Ciñcinī (i.e. Kubjikā) who is the Supreme Power and the emanation (sṛṣṭi) (that occurs when) the withdrawal (of phenomenal existence) takes place.

(In this state this energy is round and white) like a drop of milk. (Contemplating it in this form, the yogi) should lead it up to the end of the Nameless (anāmānte). Then the consecration takes place by means of that same deity in its original form.

Once (the adept) has thus contemplated (this energy), brilliant as the full moon, in the Wheel of the Heart, the place of the Full (Moon), he should induce (her) to enter her own Wheel by means of the mind (citta).

She who is praised (by all) and is supreme bliss, laughingly melts (dravate). She is the Nameless (anāmā), the energy which is consciousness (who resides) in the sphere of the Nameless (anāmamaṇḍala).

(Thus the yogi experiences) the contentment (tṛpti) of the night of the Full Moon, which arises in this way laden with nectar. This is the consecration of the Command, the entry (āgama) (of the breath that takes place) in the phase of emanation.

Once he has purified (himself) by (this process of) entry and exit (gamāgama), (the adept) should worship the Sequence (kramārcana).[152]

Such yogic visualizations of the movement of the vital breath are an important part of the Kubjikā cult taught in the Kubjikā Tantras, where they are numerous and strikingly sophisticated, as is this example. Even so, Newar initiates do not generally undertake such complex visualizations, although the Tantras prescribe them, as in this example, as part of the preliminary purifications that precede the regular Kaula rites (*kramārcana*). I have been informed, however, that Taleju Rājopādhyāyas do do so when they perform an extensive form of deposition of mantras on the body called *bṛhadnyāsa* (lit. 'Great Deposition'). As I have not had access to the liturgy that prescribes this deposition, I cannot supply precise details at present. Even so, it is clear that such elevated and internal practices are virtually the exclusive domain of only the most privileged Newar Brahmins. The reason these Brahmins advance for this is that they alone have access to the most powerful divine forms and rituals, and so need to prepare and protect themselves in additional ways not necessary for the average initiate for whom the usual, more external, ritual procedures are sufficient. But to an outside observer the feeling is irresistible that here we have yet another example of how these Brahmins have attempted to safeguard their spiritual and, hence, worldly prerogatives. Moreover, such manipulations of the original Tantric traditions in their favour along

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152 *ūrdhvasthānād bindumadhyād retorūpāṁ samuddharet* |
upakṣīṇā tu yā pūrvaṁ sā pūrṇāmṛtavarṣiṇī ||
vakraśaktiranantātmā saumyarūpā vicintayet |
saṁhārasyāgame sṛṣṭiściñcinī paramā kalā ||
ānayecca anāmānte tu kṣīrakaṇikopamā |
tato'bhiṣekastenaiva prākṣvarūpeṇa devatā ||
hṛccakre pūrṇasaṁsthāne pūrṇacandrasamaprabhā |
evaṁ saṁcintya cittena svacakre tu praveśayet ||
prahasantī parānandā dravate sābhinanditā |
citsvarūpātmikā śaktiranāmānāmamaṇḍale ||
tenāmṛtabharā tṛptiḥ paurṇamāsī pravartate |
āgamaṁ sṛṣṭibhedena etadājñābhiṣecanam ||
gamāgamena saṁśodhya paścāt kuryāt kramārcanam | (KKh 13/134-140ab)

with the uniformly central position given to this one goddess, Kubjikā, who is their lineage deity, suggests that it was such people who set up the complex system we find today and that has been operating for several centuries.[153]

That major changes were brought about that greatly favoured them cannot be doubted. According to the legends in the Kubjikā Tantras, and indeed Tantras of this sort in general, the founding figures were renunciates, not householders. The legends describe them as living a peripatetic lifestyle. They wandered from one sacred place to another, encountering in these 'meeting grounds' (*melāpasthāna*) other accomplished adepts (*siddha*) and yoginīs. At times they would interrupt their pilgrimage to live in caves or under trees where, as the Tantras tell us, they would sit with their 'gaze averted upwards' until they were granted a vision of the goddess. This is a far cry indeed from the householder life of the Brahmin guru, his Kshatriya Karmācārya assistants and high-caste initiates![154]

The Tree Goddess

The root Tantra of the Kubjikā school, the *Kubjikāmata*, does refer to the goddess's assocation with trees, but in the later texts this association is extensively explored. The early Upaniṣads had already compared the body of a man to a tree with its root the Brahman.[155] Similarly, the maṇḍala of the goddess is the tree within which she resides and over which she presides in the form of a Yakṣiṇī, an ancient India folk deity of vegetation and the earth. The whole tradition and its teachings are represented as the Tree of Consciousness that grows out of the Divine Current (*divyaugha*) of the Divine Kaula tradition. This Tree is supreme bliss. Its best fruit is the tradition of the Siddhas (*siddhaugha*). Its branches include the places that are deposited in the body, the aggregate of letters, the Rudras, Siddhas, the various types of sacred places, the divine cave, the Abyss, the Sky, and the Skyfarer (*khecara*), each of which is divided into millions of aspects.[156]

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153 One of the aims of the present on-going research is to discover since how far back this system has been operating and how it evolved. A more extensive examination of Newar Tantric liturgical works, especially early ones, will hopefully supply us with new data and shed light on the matter.

154 Dumont writes: " ... the secret of Hinduism may be found in the dialogue between the renouncer and the man-in-the-world. [...] In fact the man-in-the-world, and particularly the Brahman, is given the credit for the ideas which he may have adopted but not invented. Such ideas are much more relevant and they clearly belong to the thought of the renouncer. Is it really too adventurous to say that the agent of development in Indian religion and speculation, the 'creator of values' has been the renouncer? The Brahman as a scholar has mainly preserved, aggregated, and combined; he may well have created and developed special branches of knowledge. Not only the founding of sects and their maintenance, but the major ideas, the 'inventions' are due to the renouncer whose unique position gave him a sort of monopoly for putting everything in question" (Dumont 1980: 270, 275 quoted by Quigley 1993: 56).

155 The Bṛhadaraṇyakopaniṣad declares:

As a tree of the forest, just so, surely, is man. His hairs are leaves, his skin the outer bark. From his skin blood, sap from the bark flows forth a stream as from the tree when struck. His pieces of flesh are under-layers of wood. The fibre is muscle-like strong. The bones are the wood within. The marrow is made resembling pith. (BṛH 3/9/28, Hume's translation)

156 *divyaughaparamānandaṁ picuvaktraṁ tu kaulikam* |
tanmadhyoditacidvṛkṣaṁ mūlaśākhāsuvistaram ||

The Kaula Picu Face is the supreme bliss of the Divine Current. The Tree of Consciousness has risen from the middle of that and it has many roots and branches. (CMSS 1/28) The form of this tree is decribed up to verse 36.

This tree is especially represented as a tamarind (*ciñca*) that grows on the Island of the Moon, the goddess's maṇḍala, from the middle of the triangle. Thus, in the later Kubjikā Tantras, where this imagery is elaborated, the goddess is frequently called the Lady of the Tamarind (Ciñciṇī or Ciñcā).[157] Under the shade of this tree, which is said to be the pure bliss present within all beings,[158] one attains the supreme liberating repose beyond pleasure and pain.[159] One of the founders of the Kubjikā cult was called Vṛkṣanātha ('the Lord of the Tree') because he achieved the perfect repose (*viśrāma*) of liberation under this tree when the goddess appeared to him. There, in the shade of the tree, she transmitted the enlightening Command (*ājñā*) which gave him the authority (*adhikāra*) that empowered him both to attain this realization and to transmit the teachings which lead others to it.

Another tree closely associated with Kubjikā is the *kadamba* tree. At times it is this tree, rather than the tamarind, that symbolizes the tradition and its growth from the Vulva of the goddess's empowering Command.[160] At times this tree is the maṇḍala itself rather than a development of it. To be precise, it is the maṇḍala that has been empowered by the Command of the goddess. The goddess thus fertilizes herself, as it were, to give birth to the cosmic tree. Kṛṣṇa declares in the *Bhagavadgītā* that he is the *aśvattha* with its roots in heaven and its branches here below. Similarly, the maṇḍala empowered with mantras and the goddess's energy is the *kadamba* tree which, blazing with energy, emits its rays of mantric power down into the phenomenal world.[161] But she is not only the source of this tree, she is also born from it. She is the bud of the *kadamba* flower. In this form she has engulfed into herself (*kadambīkṛta*) all the energies of the maṇḍala and the cosmic order that it represents. Thus she contains every potential for growth and unfoldment. When the flower blossoms, she is its radiant energy which, led to the heart (the centre of one's being where the Self resides), completes the cycle. The tradition is nurtured by it and the initiate, filled with light and the energy of the tree can, like the shaman on his shamanic quest, climb it to the summit of existence.

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157 In one place this tree is said to be a *kiṁśuka* which, like the tamarind, has beautiful red flowers:

śaktitritayamadhye tu kiṁśukākāradevatā ||
piṇḍaṁ tasyā bhagākāraṁ vande trikoṇapīṭhagām |

In the midst of the three energies is the deity whose form is that of a blossom of the kiṁśuka tree. The shape of her body is that of the vulva; I praise her who resides in the sacred seat of the Triangle. (KKh 3/125cd - 126ab)

158 *ānandaṁ vimalaṁ ciñcaṁ* . . . | *ānandaṁ vyāpakaṁ deva sarvabhūteṣvavasthitam* || *The tamarind is pure bliss. . . . O god, bliss is pervasive and is present in all beings.* (KKh 17/18abd)

159 Referring to the tree which grows from the triangle of the maṇḍala, the CMSS (7/8cd) declares: *Supreme repose, devoid of pleasure and pain, is there* (*tatra viśrāntiparamaṁ sukhaduḥkhavivarjitam*).

160 *saṁketaṁ vṛkṣamūlaṁ tu yonimadhye kadambakam* |
tena vyāptamidaṁ meruḥ ālayaṁ sarvayoginām ||

The convention has as its root the tree which is the kadambaka in the centre of the Vulva. Meru, the abode of all yogis, is pervaded by it. (KKh 17/30)

161 *kṛtvā tritayasaṁyogaṁ kṣiptā ājñāntamaṇḍale* ||
raśmijvālākadambaṁ ca cintayecca adhomukham |
navalakṣakṛte deva trailokyamapi sādhayet ||

Once having formed the conjunction of the three (energies) and thrown the Command into the maṇḍala, one should think (of it) as the kadamba (tree) aflame with its rays facing downwards. Once one has (recited the Vidyā) 900,000 times, one controls even the three worlds. (KKh 11/22cd - 23)

Conclusion

There are numerous other symbols associated with the goddess Kubjikā. They, like the rituals, sacred geographies, mantras, forms of Yoga (especially those linked with the movement of the vital breath) described in her Tantras, are surprisingly rich. The texts have developed in a highly creative period of the history of Tantrism and contain numerous traces of its development. All this would be more than enough to warrant extensive research of this goddess. But there is more. The application of precept to practice is in the case of this virtually unknown goddess also surprisingly extensive. To trace its ramifications we must seek to understand the whole complex network of Newar Tantrism and so, inevitably, a major part of Newar society and its history. No doubt, this study will reveal how text and context penetrate each other, like Śiva and Śakti, to form a complete reality, internally ideal and externally concrete.

Plates

Plate 1: Two Siddhilakṣmī temples. Bhaktapur
Plate 2: The Ñātāpwa(n)la temple dedicated to Siddhilakṣmī in Ta:mārhī square, Bhaktapur.
Plate 3: The three images in Ñātāpwa(n)la. Siddhilaksmī is in the middle. To her left is Śmaśānabhairava and on her right Mahākāla.

Bhaktapur is unique insofar as it boasts three Siddhilakṣmī temples, all three of which originally contained stone images of the goddess. They were built by three successive Malla kings, who ruled between the middle of the 17th century and the first quarter of the 18th century. This was a period when many of the most beautiful and important temples were built in all three of the cities of the Valley. The urge to build these temples by the Bhaktapur Mallas indicates a need to externalize the cult of their lineage deity to bring her powerful, beneficial presence into the public civic space. This urge was part of an overall resurgence of Tantrism throughout the Valley that is visibly evident by the flowering of the vast complex of iconic forms that adorn the temples of that period. This was also the time when the liturgies of Siddhilakṣmī, the goddess Taleju, that still govern the form of her secret rituals nowadays, were redacted by the *gurus* of the Mallas, the Taleju Rājopādhyāya Brahmins.

The first of these temples is in plain red brick with a tiled roof. It was built by Jagatprakāśamalla who ruled between 1643 and 1672 and is situated next to the palace. It contained a stone statue of the goddess that is now missing. His son, Jitāmitramalla who reigned between 1673 and 1696 built the second temple. This is situated next to the temple built by his father (see plate 1). It is a small, gray stone, *śikhara* type of temple decorated with multi-armed images of forms of the goddess Mahiṣāsuramardinī. She is the public representation of all the secret lineage goddesses and, therefore, also of Siddhilakṣmī. The image inside the temple is still in place. It is about one meter high and carved in black stone.

The third temple is Ñātāpwa(n)la, famous as the tallest temple in the Valley; Bhūpatīndramalla, the son of Jitāmitra, who ruled between 1696-1722, built it. According to a well-known story, Bhūpatīndramalla had a dream in which he saw the Bhairava who resides in the temple in Ta:mārhī square on a destructive rampage. When he awoke, he felt the presence of his lineage goddess who told him to build a temple to her in order to control Bhairava. Bhairava is the god of the lower castes, especially farmers, who made up, and still do, the majority of the population. It is hard to resist the feeling that in actual fact Bhūpatīndramalla was worried about unrest amongst his subjects whose growing influence was represented in his dream by the increased destructive power of their god. In a culturewheremagical Tantric action is felt to be more powerful than the outer use of force, Bhūpatīndramalla accordingly built his temple on six high plinths with five pagoda roofs so as to tower above the Bhairava temple to one side of it in Ta:mārhī square. Indeed, just the plinths are so high that the image of the goddess in the sanctum on the first story stands above its counterpart in the Bhairava temple. She is surrounded by small wooden carvings of the sixty-four yoginīs that are placed at the head and in between the supporting wooden pillars around the outside of the sanctum to intensify her female energy and channel it to the outside.

The iconography of the goddess further reinforces her dominance over the god. She stands on Bhairava who supports her with two of his four hands. He is Kālāgni-rudra, the embodiment of the Fire of Time that consumes the worlds at the end of each cosmic cycle. In the bronze representation reproduced here (see plate 4), he looks up at the goddess and has two hands joined in an attitude of devotion. As Bhairava was the esoteric identity of the Malla kings, they were the intermediaries between the common people, who worshipped Bhairava, and the goddess who was

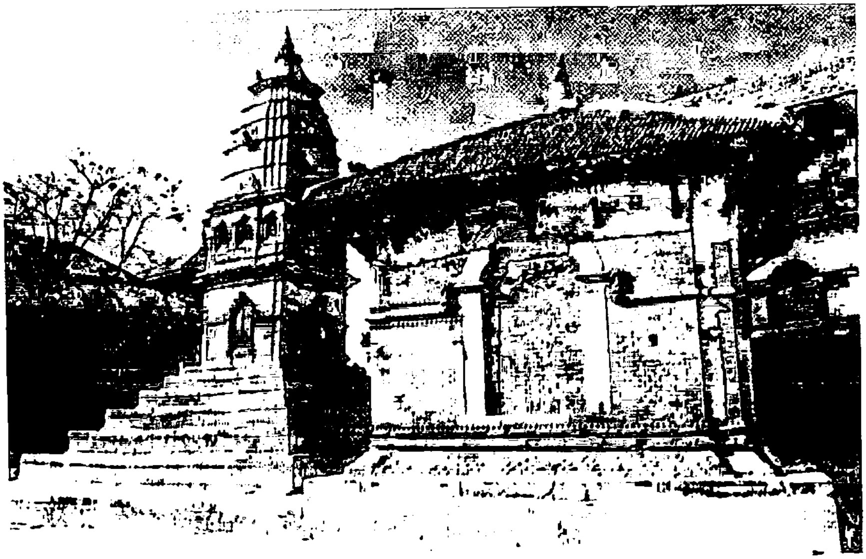


Plate 1

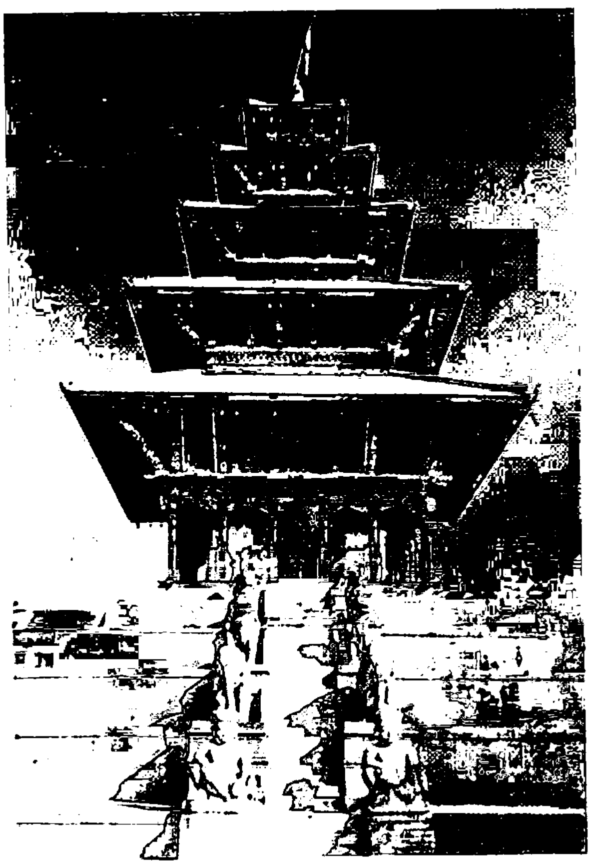


Plate 2



Plate 5



Plate 6



Plate 7

the Malla's tutelary and hence that of the entire kingdom. The hierarchy of power is mirrored for the public to see in the increase by ten of the strength of the beings represented by pairs of statues positioned on both sides of the stairs, a pair for each plinth, leading up to the sanctum.

It seems that Jagatjyoti and Jitāmitra were more liberal than Bhūpatīndra. The image in the temple built by the first of these three may well have been accessible to the public. Again, although the second temple is a closed one, parts of the image are visible through the wooden latticework of the doors. As for Nyatapola, the third temple, it is carefully sealed off from all those who are not specially permitted to enter it. These are the Taleju Rājopādhyāya Brahmins and the Taleju Karmācāryas. The latter are the main priests of this temple who perform the daily obligatory rites. When more elaborate occasional rites require it, assistants aid them. One amongst them made a rough painting of the images inside the temple. On the basis of this painting Jñānakara Vajrācārya has made the ink drawing reproduced in plate 3, the first ever published of these images.

All three images are carved in black stone and are finely polished. The main image in the center of Siddhilakṣmī is over two meters high. As the doors of the sanctum are considerably smaller than this image, it must have been lowered into it before the ceiling was built.

Siddhilakṣmī has nine heads and eighteen arms. She holds in the first seven of her right hands, from the uppermost down, a sword, trident, arrow, conch, mace, solar disc and vajra. She makes a fear dispelling gesture with the eighth hand and, along with the ninth left hand, holds a jar (*kalaśa*). The corresponding hands on the left hold a skull bowl, stick, bow, flower, wheel, lunar disc, bell, makes a boon bestowing gesture and holds a jar.

She has two legs. One is extended and the other bent. She stands on two of the four hands of Kālāgnirudra who kneels on one knee below her. Kālāgni has four arms. The two that are not supporting the goddess hold, on the right, a trident and, on the left, a double-headed drum. He stands on a prostrate Vetāla who looks up at him and holds a skull-bowl in one of his two hands.

To the right of Siddhilakṣmī is Mahākāla. He stands on a thousand hooded snake that is supported by a lotus (not shown in this drawing). In his right hands he holds a sword, ascetic's staff (*khaṭvāṅga*), wide flat headed knife (*kartṛkā*), snake and rosary. In the left hands he holds a stick, double-headed drum, skull bowl, noose and trident. He wears an elephant skin and has four faces.

To the left of Siddhilakṣmī is Śmasānabhairava. He is in the cremation ground. His left foot is extended and is supported by three devotees who are praying to him. A fourth devotee is kneeling on the other side of burning funeral pyre into which all four are making offerings. Śmaśānabhairava's right leg is bent and is supported by a squatting Vetāla who holds a skull-bowl in one of his two hands. Below are four animals. From left to right of the god, they are a parrot, dog, crow and a fox.

Plate 4: Siddhilakṣmī

This plate is by courtesy of the National Museum, New Delhi. The bronze is described in Dawson, J. E. 1999: 43 as Śvacchanda Bhairavī. Utpala, 10th century AD. Chamba, Himachal Pradesh. Bronze, 37.0 x 24.0 x 7.0 cm. Acc. No. 64.102." Sanderson (1990: 63f.) has established that this is actually an image of Siddhilakṣmī. I have been informed that a similar image made of eight metals (*aṣṭadhātu*) is worshipped as the tutelary of the Malla kings in the chapel (*āgañ*) of the royal palace in Bhaktapur. The goddess in the bronze reproduced here is seated on Kālāgnirudra who supports her with two hands. His other two hands are joined at the palms in a gesture of prayer. Fire comes from his mouth as he looks up at the goddess in adoration who is looking at him. The goddess has five heads and ten arms. Her right hands hold, from top to bottom, a sword, a trident, a skull-staff and a skull-bowl. The fifth hand makes a fear dispelling gesture. In the

corresponding left hands she holds a goad, a manuscript, a noose, makes a wish granting gesture and holds a hatchet.

Plate 5: Kubjikā.

This painting by Jñānakara Vajrācārya is based on the visualized form of the goddess Kubjikā described in the *Paścimajyeṣṭhāmnāyakarmārcanapaddhati*. This typical Newar liturgy represents the goddess in a form in which Newar initiates commonly visualize her. I have chosen this source accordingly. There are several variants, especially in the attributes she holds, of the corresponding form described in the Kubjikā Tantras. Seven variant visualizations are described in the *Manthānabhairava -tantraṭīkā* by Rūpaśiva (fol. 9ff). Others are found in the KKh 29/33ff. and 49/25cd ff., KnT (fol. 11a ff.) and KRU 8/53 ff.. In this case she holds in the right hands, from top to bottom, a trident, the mirror of Karma, a vajra, a goad, arrow and flat sacrificial knife. In the corresponding left hands she holds a severed head, ascetic's staff, bell, scriptures, a bow and a skull bowl. She wears a lion and a tiger skin and a garland of human heads and is surrounded by a circle of stars (*tārāmaṇḍala*).

The *paddhati* says that she has a large belly and is bent (*kubjārūpā*). She is adorned with snakes. These features are emphasized in several descriptions of this form in the Tantras as well. They indicate that she is the snake goddess, Kuṇḍalinī. She is seated on a lotus that grows from Śiva's navel who lies prone below her on a throne (*siṁhāsana*). According to the Kubjikā Tantras, the navel is the place where she rests in the form of a coiled snake and from where she rises. The image therefore represents the goddess as Kuṇḍalinī emerging from the god as his divine will (*icchāśakti*).

Another interesting feature is the yellow colour of the front (*pūrva*) face. This is not the usual colour of this face according to the texts. A few learned Newar initiates affectionately refer to Kubjikā in Nevārī as *māsukvaḥ mājū* – the Yellow Faced Mother. A large bronze mask representing this goddess is found in a temple close to that of Vajrayoginī in the vicinity of the Śanku. The Newars associate the yellow colour of her face with Brahmāṇī, the first of the eight Mothers (*mātṛkā*). I suppose that this connection explains why the Durgā dancers of Bhaktapur receive their empowerment from Brahmāṇī (alias Kubjikā) in a ritual performed at her shrine just after the nine day Durgā festival held in autumn.

Plate 6: Guhyeśvarī

This form of Guhyeśvarī, painted by Jñānakara Vajrācārya, is described in the *Gorakṣasaṁhitā* (14/159-167) where she appears as the embodiment of Kubjikā's weapon (*astradūtī*). Newar initiates worship this form as the most secret aspect of Guhyeśvarī. The text describes her as dark blue with a large, heavy body. She wears a black garment and a garland of skulls. She has five faces and ten arms. In the right hands she holds, from top to bottom, a trident, mace, noose, goad and sword. In the corresponding left hands, she holds a skull-bowl, shield, arrow, severed head and pestle.

Plate 7: Tripurāsundarī

This painting by Jñānakara Vajrācārya is a typical Newar representation of the goddess Tripurāsundarī. This form is closely related to the goddess Kāmeśvarī. She sits on two layers of heads. The upper layer represents the gods of the five gross elements, called the Five Causes (*pañcakaraṇa*). They are, from left to right Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara and Sadāśiva. The lower

set of heads represent the seven Mothers (*mātṛkā*). These are, from left to right, Brahmāṇī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Cāmuṇḍā and Mahālakṣmī.

Tripurā is red, beautiful and well adorned. She has one head and four arms. The upper right hand holds a goad, the one below five arrows. The left hands hold a noose and a bow.

Abbreviations

BṛH	Bṛhadaraṇyakopaniṣad
CGC	Cidgaganacandrikā
CMSS	Ciñcinīmatasārasamuccaya*[162]
CSS	Candra Saṁśer Collection
GS	Gorakṣasaṁhitā
KMT	Kubjikāmatatantra
KKh	Kumārikākhaṇḍa of the Manthānabhairavatantra*
KnT	Kubjikānityāhnikatilaka
KRU	Kularatnoddyota*
KSTS	Kashmiri Series of Texts and Studies
MNP	Mahānayaprakāśa by Arṇasiṁha*
MP	Mahānayaprakāśa by Śitikaṇṭha
MS	Manuscript
MV	Mālinīvijayottaratantra
NAK	National Archives Kathmandu
NGMPP	Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project
PL	Palm-leaf manuscript
PTv	Parātrīṁśīkāvivaraṇa
ŚB	Śatapathabrahmaṇa
ŚM	Śrīmatottaratantra*
ṢaṭSS	Ṣaṭsāhasrasaṁhitā*
SKh	Siddhakhaṇḍa of the Manthānabhairavatantra
SvT	Svacchandabhairavatantra
SŚP	Somaśambhupaddhati
TĀ	Tantrāloka
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

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